ISRAEL UNDER BEGIN **IRENE L. GENDZIER**

THE NATION

JUNE 18, 1977 60 cents

high tension in the energy debate

THE CLAMSHELL REACTION HARVEY WASSERMAN

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LETTERS

happy retreat

Exeter, Calif.

Having read Gregor Pinney's "Back to 2 Plus 2: Counter-revolution in Math" [*The Nation*, May 21], I pulled out my underlined copy of Morris Kline's *Why Johnny Can't Add*. Kline proved the failure of the New Math, using half a dozen or more independent lines of reasoning. . . .

If you teach the New Math with its endless vocabulary, awkward sentence structures, and seemingly pointless statements of what is obvious, you don't have much time to teach algebra or geometry or trig. Once learned, the New Math seems to slip away from the students, mainly because it is of no earthly use in solving equations, working word problems or doing formal geometric proofs. . . .

I wonder why, out of a freshman class of 300 due to arrive next September, only fifty have signed up for algebra. It will be like all the other recent years—these freshmen will be having trouble with arithmetic, real trouble, even though they are the brightest kids in the class. Several years later how many will be left to take trig and physics? A dozen, perhaps, as there were this year. I lay the blame largely on Mr. Pinney's "New Math." Long live the counterrevolution!

John Liston, Exeter Union High School

the Zaire connection

Camas, Wash.

Reed Kramer's "Bankers' Stakes in Zaire" [*The Nation*, Apr. 30] was splendid in that it cut through the propaganda put out by the daily newspapers and weekly magazines. To hear them talk, one would think that the neo-colonialist tyrant Mobutu was just about the best leader Africa has ever had. . . .

To say that the Zaire situation, if treated skillfully enough by government and corporation propagandists, could land us in another Vietnam-like situation is probably not an exaggeration. Given the "Soviet threat" and the "Cuban presence," which have been blamed for Zaire's troubles, that possibility should not be overlooked.

About the only good thing that might come out of this situation would be the exposure of Mobutu's CIA links. If yet another client should be exposed for what he is, then one more foundation stone of the anti-Communist foreign policy edifice would be chipped away.

Frank W. Goheen

pro-laetrile, anti-fluoridation

Los Angeles, Calif.

It is false to say [editorial, *The Nation*, May 28] that 500 want laetrile legitimated. There are thousands all over the country signing petitions to compensate for the failures of orthodox medicine to bring cancer under control. In Indiana, Dr. Helen M. Calvin got 40,000 to sign such a petition. The House of Representatives in that state approved a bill 85 to 10 to permit the manufacture and use of this nontoxic treatment for cancer.

It is false to designate laetrile a drug when in twenty-two countries outside the United States wealthy Americans get it as vitamin B 17. Just as Vitamin C is made from rose hips, so laetrile is made from apricot pits. The Chinese have used apricot pits to control tumors for 3,000 years. Natural substances are best for Chinese and Americans too.

It is false to say exhaustive tests were made on laetrile. Some years ago when a license was issued for such testing the FDA abruptly withdrew it a week later. . . .

I've been a member of the (Unitarian) Fellowship For Social Justice for twenty-eight years and of the American

(Continued on page 756)

EDITORIALS

A Little Less Noise, Please

We don't yet know Ambassador Andrew Young's views on what should be done to check the relentless advance northward of Latin America's killer bees or on the likelihood of seismic shocks in Indonesia, but we know almost everything else he thinks. There is hardly a major or minor topic on which this interesting but much too voluble figure has not sounded off. Overexposure is hardly an adequate term for the constant stream of thoughts, dreams, fantasies and preachments of President Carter's Ambassador to the United Nations.

Perhaps the atmosphere at the U.N. has something to do with the logorrhea that afflicts Young. It could be that he thinks only a cascade of words (mostly on the right side) can submerge the memory of one of his predecessors, Daniel Patrick Moynihan (whose utterances in that forum were mostly wrong). But Young does not limit his talking to pronouncements in that tower of oratory. He will give anyone the benefit of his thinking or notions on almost any subject proposed; his verbal pump needs no priming.

Young has appalled the right-thinkers of this country with his wide-swinging speeches and countless interviews. They are shocked not only by the substance of his views but by the informal, not to say undiplomatic, manner in which he delivers them. The disapproval of the guardians of conventional wisdom would tend to make us pro-Young, given their frequent misapprehensions in the past, and we have indeed hailed Young as an "interesting and appealing" figure who is generally on the right side of the big issues. Nevertheless, we think it is time for Andrew Young to start guarding his words. Their volume is beginning to depreciate their value.

His latest shocker is a prediction, only slightly qualified, that a race war in South Africa would cause whites in America "to panic" and attack American blacks. Young was making the valid point in this interview (*Playboy*, July) that "there's no way we won't be affected" by such a dreadful (and, one must say, likely) event in the land of apartheid. He was trying to convince Americans, with his ultra-vivid prediction, that this country must do everything in its power to bring about a rapid transition to majority rule in South Africa.

But Young went too far, we think, when he transferred the racial violence of the probably inevitable clash in South Africa to our shores; the identification of whites and blacks in this country with the whites and blacks in that benighted country is just not that close. Nor is it fatuous to hope that the people of the United States will be strongly united behind a policy that does everything it can to avert a bloody racial confrontation there, but will, in any case, support the long-denied rights of the huge black majority. Young's words on this dangerously explosive situation have the unpleasant ring of a self-fulfilling prophecy. That was obviously not his intent but it is its effect.

He has probably not damaged the interests of this country by his repeated statement that Britain, and even

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Sweden, not to say (which he did) Russia, are "racist." Given his own past in the struggle to right the worst wrongs of racism in this country, it is natural that the lens through which he views things in the world enormously magnifies the racial element in all international equations. The factor of race has been wrongly minimized in the past. It is not alarming to us that he has found Cuban adventurism in Africa "stabilizing," in a sense, though that too is a notion that could be carried too far.

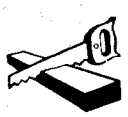
Andrew Young has been the point man for some necessary changes in this country's attitude toward the world. Carter certainly knew what he was doing when he named him to his high post; he was recognizing that "public diplomacy," as against the quiet kind, has a real function in a world of mass societies, starting with our own. Young said a revealing thing last month in an interview on Public Radio with Pauline Frederick, when he declared that he thought the President understood the distinction he himself made between "preaching and policy" —that "it makes sense to float ideas in your preaching." He admits that he thinks of himself as a preacher of international morality and declares, in that same interview, that he has "no credentials for foreign policy" in the orthodox sense of proper training in the diplomatic arts and styles.

Young has useful things to say and do in his important job. The trouble is that he is drowning out his central message in the static of his random observations on this and that. That is why we presume to counsel this remarkable man to reduce the flow of his ideas and words and to save his energies for the really big questions of foreign policy, both moral and practical.

A Package for the Have-Nots

It was a cliffhanger. Until the last moment of the last exhausting all-night session, the North-South economic dialogue (formally known as the Conference on International Cooperation and Development) teetered on the edge of complete breakdown. Its collapse would probably have led to painful economic warfare. The accord that was so suspensefully achieved must therefore be seen as a triumph of sorts, representing as it does, in *Newsweek*'s words, "a small measure of progress." But the measure was small indeed, leaving unsolved virtually all the problems posed by the Third World's demand for a new economic order.

The progress in Paris is largely attributable to a more forthcoming approach by the rich Northern nations—an approach the Carter administration played no small part in shaping. The President's two predecessors and their Secretary of State had naturally scoffed at the notion that there was anything unjust about the present economic order, and had stonewalled any suggestions for real change. But last March Carter let it be known that an American



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IN THIS ISSUE

June 18, 1977

EDITORIALS

738

ARTICLES

742 Israel Under Begin:
Changing Horses in the Old Stream — *Irene L. Gendzier*

High Tension in the Energy Debate
744 The Clamshell Reaction — *Harvey Wasserman*
746 Johnny Carson Sets Us Straight
749 California's Fight for the Sun — *Fred Branfman*

751 "When the President Does It . . .":
What the Tapes Really Reveal — *Irving Louis Horowitz*

754 Wilmington 10:
The Trial They Never Had — *Mark Pinsky*

BOOKS & THE ARTS

757 Trilling: We Must March My Darlings — *Ronald Radosh*
758 Something to Save Us (poem) — *James Galvin*
759 Lewis, Oscar & Ruth M., and Rigdon: Four Men — *Jose Yglesias*
760 Tidal Lagoon, The Red House, Line of Trees (poems) — *W.S. Merwin*
763 Bidart: The Book of the Body
Williams: With Ignorance — *James Atlas*
763 Drought (poem) — *Keith Bosley*
766 Films — *Robert Hatch*

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administration would for the first time favor the concept of a "common fund" to establish buffer stocks of raw materials that would stabilize prices and improve the Third World's terms of trade. He also indicated sympathy for other Third World proposals, and at the London economic summit conference apparently helped bring other countries—particularly the reluctant West Germans—around to his point of view. The result was a package of proposals for reform that the rich countries took to Paris, and that provided a basis for the final agreement.

So far, so good, but the modest nature of the Northern package indicates that the new American attitude may be more a shift of posture than of policy. Its most substantial point was an offer of $1 billion more in aid to the poorest countries, a relatively small sum. The North agreed *in principle* to establish a common fund, but left its details for later negotiations. Also pledged were more funds for the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and for the improvement of Third World agriculture. Two major Southern demands—for debt relief on the $200 billion owed by the Third World to the First, and for "indexation" of commodity prices to prices of Western manufactured goods—were rejected.

In return for their "concessions," the wealthy nations made some demands of their own. The most important was that discussions continue, not between North and South, and not on the general subject of terms of trade and finance but on energy matters, between oil-producing and oil-consuming states. Northern negotiators admitted that they hoped such talks would pressure OPEC to hold down prices. They were less frank about the move's other aim: to split the Third World, setting the oil-importing poor countries against the OPEC group, which has been a goal of American foreign policy since the 1973 OPEC successes.

The poor countries wisely avoided that trap, as they have in the past. They refused to discuss oil apart from other trade questions, and when the North retreated to a proposal for broader discussions in some unspecified format, the South reacted coldly. Some Western observers expressed amazement at the poor countries' support for OPEC, but the reasons for it are quite clear. First, the OPEC economies, while momentarily awash with cash, exhibit every other characteristic of underdevelopment; they are more like other Third World countries than they are different. Second, it was only OPEC's success that forced the North to talk with the South at all. Third, the OPEC nations have made every effort to show solidarity with the Third World; for example, they have pledged $1.5 billion to the common fund, an action the North has yet to take.

Whether or not there has been a real change of policy in Washington will be revealed during the next months as the commodity negotiations proceed. We shall also see if Carter pushes hard for more foreign aid in a Congress that will no doubt prove recalcitrant, and if a new format for North-South talks is hammered out. At least the Paris conference gives some cause to hope that Carter has recognized that the old policies will no longer serve. It remains for the American Government to back up its verbal pledges with political and financial support—because increased private investment in the Third World (the Kissinger solution) and more aid, while welcome, will not long avert the upheavals that loom if the Third World's terms of trade continue to erode.

The Carters

Rosalynn Carter is Ambassador from Wherever to her husband the President. It only seems that she is his emissary to Latin America. She made that plain when impertinently asked by a reporter for her credentials to discuss serious matters with heads of state: "I think I am the person closest to the President of the United States, and if I can help him understand the countries of the world, then that's what I intend to do."

This is something new. The wives of our Presidents have played all sorts of roles (mostly ceremonial), but never one quite like this. Apparently the term the Carters use about it is "substantive," meaning that what Mrs. Carter does has a bearing on the conduct of government. She will not be lost in the world of graciousness and protocol, not to mention mere White House-keeping.

One natural reflex will be that we did not elect the Carters as a couple to perform the functions of the chief magistracy. The argument would be that it was *he* who was elected to carry out those constitutional duties and that *she* should be no more than an adjunct—anything more having an unrepublican, even regal, tinge to it. The Royal Family.

As with so many aspects of the Carter administration, there are puzzles and ambiguities in this relationship. The President has made it plain that he wishes to employ his wife's talents in a serious way, and she has been just as clear about not wanting to be used in any other way. Each of them has a steely desire to be taken seriously, in the service of the country. Carter told *Newsweek* (June 13) that "She probably knows the human aspect of the American people and their relationship to the government better than me." A standard bow, perhaps, to the convention that women have the greater sensitivity toward people, but he means it.

Franklin D. Roosevelt might not have put it in that confessional style, not so openly at least, but his sentiments about his wife's acumen, and therefore her usefulness, were not much different. As Joseph Lash writes (in *Eleanor Roosevelt: A Friend's Memoir*), "he had a healthy respect for Mrs. Roosevelt's powers of observation, her good judgment, her sense of values." There is no evidence yet that Rosalynn Carter plays the same kind of role that Eleanor Roosevelt did with her husband, that of a conscientious nag (sometimes too much so for his taste), constantly reminding him of Duty and curbing his relaxation into frivolous banter.

The term First Lady has gone out of fashion in Washington, but that seems to be how President Carter regards his wife. As he said about her Latin American swing, the leaders she would meet "will be both surprised and pleased at what she knows and how close she is to me." Whatever else the Carters are, they are surely a Presidential Couple.

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A Konstitution

To Americans the idea of a "constitution" for the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is a joke. For us such a document can only be the result of decisions, made by men who are already free, on how they will govern themselves—which is to say, what personal liberties they will agree to have limited so that great numbers of them can collectively function in a society or state.

By definition, we think, such a compact cannot be laid down by those who already hold unchallenged power. And it can have no effect or binding force unless its principles and rules are freely accepted—"ratified," we say—by a large consultation of those who would be governed by such an instrument.

Not one of those conditions exists for the fourth "constitution" drawn up by Russia's rulers since Lenin and his followers seized power sixty years ago. The promulgation of this document by the party hierarchy in the Kremlin (for "ratification" by the party-appointed and therefore powerless law-making body called the Supreme Soviet) is therefore a parody of any process we could call "constitutional." And the fact that it is the first Russian political charter since Stalin proclaimed the third "constitution" in 1936, on the eve of the Great Purge of the following two years, turns this exercise into tragicomedy.

More than a million "enemies of the Soviet Union" were killed by Stalin's executioners in that monstrous blood bath, often in the name of the "constitutional" rights and duties that had just been announced and were dead letters on the unobserved pages of that document. Millions more were imprisoned and exiled without recourse to its theoretical protections.

Two sentences in the proposed Brezhnev document give all one needs to recognize the "unconstitutional" nature of this charter, in the American sense of what is and is not constitutional. One reads: "Exercise by citizens of rights and freedoms must not injure the interests of society and the state, and the rights of other citizens." The other (as if that were not enough to make the state paramount) is: "The exercise of rights and freedoms shall be inseparable from the performance by citizens of their duties." It will be obvious even to citizen-subjects of a state in which individual rights have never been anything but remote abstractions that if the state defines the "duties," there can be no "rights."

All this, of course, is familiar stuff which needs no hammering home. The puzzle is about the fanfare that accompanied the unveiling of a document which, the Kremlin tells us, has been labored over for fifteen years. Two explanations are offered for the trumpeting. One is that, for the first time, the position of the Communist Party at the center of the Soviet system is spelled out. It is declared to be its "leading and guiding force," it "exists for the people and serves the people." The second is that party chief Brezhnev is apparently about to assume also the role of President, ending the party-government leadership separation that followed the downfall of Nikita Khrushchev in 1964. There seems to be neither a serious reason for, nor a major obstacle to, this enhancement of the predominant role of First Secretary Brezhnev. It is said that he has been annoyed by the protocolary inconvenience at international gatherings of being just a party boss.

These are cosmetic changes in the Soviet system, having little to do with the substance of political life in that country. That remains just as it was, even after the removal of the old slogan about the dictatorship of the proletariat, which has never meant more than iron control by the hierarchy of a party bureaucracy.

In fact, the conditions for those Russians who have bravely tried to resist this repressive apparatus are worse than they have been for quite a while. Virtually all the members of the committee of dissidents which set itself up to monitor Soviet observance of the Helsinki Accords have been locked up on the eve of the conference called in Belgrade to review the effects of that agreement. The Kremlin will have enough "image" trouble at Belgrade without embarrassing needling from that quarter. It is easy enough to crack down on the protesters, under the terms of the old or any new "constitution," or by old-fashioned authoritarian ukase.

Meanwhile, one of the most interesting of the Soviet dissidents, the exiled Andrei Amalrik, keeps urging the United States to keep up the pressure for "human rights." He writes in *The Washington Post* that "President Carter evidently understands" how this can and should work and that continued adherence to these principles "may give back to the West its faltering self-confidence and provide it with a new goal." Amalrik believes that Carter's "hard line" on this matter has "saved many people from possible arrest."

The hard line has been muted lately, probably in the interest of making progress on the strategic arms limitation talks. But nothing has been taken back. The banner still hangs there, even if it flaps in the breeze a bit less vigorously these days. And the proposed new Soviet "constitution" simply serves as a reminder of the real nature of that system and of the difficulty of resisting it either from within or without.

To Whom It May Concern

The United Nations, that paralyzed bureaucracy of this planet's nation states, is about to send a note in a bottle to the universe's extraterrestrials. The gesture of amity toward our friendly (one hopes) neighboring galactoids is no more peculiar or irrelevant than most things that come out of the gleaming tower on New York's East River.

"We step out of our solar system into the universe," goes Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim's message in the package NASA will send spinning into the void this summer, "seeking only peace and friendship, to teach if we are called on, to be taught if we are fortunate." On some distant day a capsule might land on planet earth with some simple wisdom from the denizens of outer space.

It might say something like "Cut down on the paper work," or "How will you ever end man's inhumanity to man if UNESCO won't even consider the matter of official torture because so many of your nations practice it?"

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ISRAEL UNDER BEGIN

Changing Horses in the Old Stream

IRENE L. GENDZIER

It has become almost commonplace to express shock over the outcome of the Israeli election and, specifically, to decry the emergence of the Likud and of its leader, Menahem Begin, as the probable future Prime Minister of Israel. Judging by the responses of the Carter administration and the media, it is also feared that a Likud government may imperil America's new look in the Middle East, including the elaborate plans for a Geneva conference. Domestically, questions have been raised about the effect of the election on the American Zionist establishment and the Jewish community, it being implicitly understood that a shift in their positions *vis-à-vis* the Israeli Government would have important reverberations in Congress. The election itself is referred to, erroneously, as a "shift to the Right," and there is talk of an anti-Likud coalition emerging in Israel to restore the "moderate" leadership of pre-election days. These reactions speak to significant aspects of the election results, but they also obscure certain realities of Israeli and Middle Eastern politics the appreciation of which is indispensable to understanding the election.

Attention has focused almost exclusively on the foreign policy platform of the Likud, and observers have been disconcerted by its blatant annexationist position. Thus, they have tended to exaggerate and distort the differences between the Likud and the Labor alignment, referring to the former as "hawkish" and the latter as "moderate." There are differences between Likud and the Labor alignment; their histories and policies on internal matters have often been in conflict. But on the question of a settlement, on peace with the Palestinians and the Arab world, the gap is narrow indeed. Further, analyses of the May 17th election have all but obscured the relation between the Israeli situation and developments within the Arab world which, in turn, have a bearing on the American position and the nature of the pressure it can or cannot apply on Israel.

Although Menahem Begin speaks as though his party had won a landslide victory, the election was no "swing to the Right," though various small right-wing parties won a few more seats in the Knesset.

What really stunned Israelis and foreigners alike was the defeat of the alignment and the reduction of the Labor Party—whose role has been central in Israel's history—to a much reduced position in the Knesset, and therefore in the government. There were other surprises, such as the emergence of the new Democratic Movement for Change, a conservative conglomerate with a hierarchy of highly placed industrialists and former intelligence chiefs. It remains to be seen what effect the Histadrut elections will have on the position of Labor with respect to the Likud Cabinet.

The defeat of Labor has been explained as expressing public dissatisfaction with the state of the economy, the rampant inflation, the nearly constant wave of strikes, the heavy burden which the underprivileged Oriental Jewish community bears, and the exposé of scandals at the top. Just how Begin and the Likud will be able to reverse the direction of the economic trends, given their conception of the state and the nature of their foreign policy, is difficult to imagine. But one may predict confrontations with those voters who count on the Likud to right the wrongs of the present administration, as well as with Labor in opposition. During the campaign, Begin and Peres debated their respective positions on the question of a settlement with the Arabs and other matters related to foreign policy.

What emerged, though, was akin to a contest between the two to determine which was the more hard-line with respect to territories. Yet Begin, with victory in hand, has maintained that voters were attracted to his party because of its uncompromising stand on these very questions. And now, the dominant theme of post-election analyses in the United States is that we have lost a "moderate" ally, it being argued in some places that this is a result of indiscreet pressures which our government applied to Peres and the Labor alignment.

To a striking degree the practices of Labor governments since 1967 with respect to Palestinians and the territories have approximated the harshly stated annexationist views of the Likud. Unlike Begin and the Likud, the Labor alignment maintained a two-faced policy, projecting a liberal image of itself as reluctant though enlightened colonizers, while following a practice that has involved repression, expulsion and annexations no different from what Likud policy implies. As an example of this one may contrast the statement given to *The New York Times* (May 15) by Israel's Director General of the Foreign Ministry, Shlomo Avineri, with a brief reference to Labor's practices with respect to the Palestinian problem. Avineri maintained in his analysis of how "to solve the Palestinian problem" that at least since the formation of the Rabin government in 1974,

> Israel has had a coherent and thoughtful policy with regard to the Palestinian question; this policy recognized the necessity to solve, within a general peace agreement, the problem of Palestinian self-identity; it committed the government to seek such a solution; it viewed the context of such an agreement to be worked out with Jordan, and opposed the establishment of an independent West Bank state.

Given the timing and placement of this statement one may assume that it was designed to project an image of the Labor alignment as amenable to reasonable discussion, if not to compromise, on the Palestinian problem, while indicating its opposition to a Palestinian state. Why Labor

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Behrendt, Het Paorol (Amsterdam)

Menahem Begin

has consistently felt it necessary—unlike Likud—to present itself in such a light, given the nature of its actual policies, is an interesting question. Suffice it to point out here that its practice has not reflected this vision.

From 1967 to 1976, for instance, it has been estimated that the Labor government approved no fewer than sixty-eight settlements in occupied territory, at a cost of roughly $500 million. And there seems to be no doubt that it intended then and continues now to plan for more settlements. (For a graphic illustration of Israeli settlements from 1967-74 see "The Map of Israeli Colonies," published by the Israel Information Center/Publication Service, printed by Karta in Jerusalem, 1975.) And though the appearance of Menahem Begin at the Gush Emunim settlement of Kaddum immediately after his election victory was interpreted as a confirmation of Likud's hawkishness, it would be erroneous to conclude that other parties have not supported these settlements. Shimon Peres, for instance, when he was Minister of Defense in 1975, supported the very same settlement and more recently approved the Gush Emunim settlement at Mas'ha, near Tulkarem in the West Bank.

It appears, then, that support for the controversial policy of approving settlement in occupied territories is far less controversial in Israel than one might suspect from reactions to the Likud's avowedly annexationist position. If a "spirit of compromise" is nevertheless apparent in Yadin's Democratic Movement for Change and Peres's Labor alignment, it is in their expressions of willingness to cede part of the West Bank (minus the thirty-five settlements there) to King Hussein. This implementation of what is, in essence, the Allon plan, of course automatically eliminates the possibility of returning control of the area to the Palestinians who live there. In fact, for Labor as well as for virtually all other parties in Israel, save Rakah (the Communist Party) and other smaller left-wing groups and parties, negotiations with the Palestinians and the PLO are ruled out. Here again, differences among individuals and parties may be impressive, but the overall position of the Labor alignment and the Likud are similar. Eric Marsden, writing in *The Sunday Times* (of London) on May 22 ("Israel: Not So Much an Election, More a Revolution"), described Begin as rationalizing the "injustice of denying the West Bank's 700,000 Palestinians a homeland by pledging that, so long as they accept life as a minority in a Jewish state, their rights and opportunities will be safeguarded—though he fought savagely against a similar offer to Jews when they were in the minority during the British Mandate." But such prominent Laborites as Israel Galilee, Moshe Dayan and Yitzhak Rabin never offered more. In sum, experience with the policy of the Labor alignment toward the Palestinian problem should alert observers to the significance of its practice which has included repression and expulsions in and from the West Bank, as well as annexations of Israeli-Arab lands, most recently in the region of the Galilee.

A measure of skepticism is therefore counseled toward the moans occasioned by the victory of an annexationist government over its "moderate" predecessor. Skepticism is also in order with respect to the discussion of American pressure on Israel. It must be evident, after all, that whatever convictions the State Department may hold on the subject, in practice the United States has not effectively curbed the settlements or other illegal practices of Israelis in occupied territories. Agreements between Israel and Egypt, between Israel and Syria, have not involved major withdrawals—whatever the publicity at the time may have suggested. Whether the United States under Carter will, in fact, seek to implement its current Middle East policy, which involves Israel's withdrawal to the 1967 borders, with rectifications and the recognition of Palestinian demands—as interpreted by the United States—remains to be seen.

Finally, it is worth thinking briefly about the relevance of the situation of the Arab states *vis-à-vis* Israel and the United States since the 1973 war. A current assumption is that Saudi Arabia, Syria and Egypt are now able to exert considerable pressure on Washington, and therefore on Israel, mainly through the political use of oil. Without pursuing this subject in depth here, it is useful to recall that what has made a change in the Middle East since the 1973 war is the success of American policy, particularly toward its newest allies in the region—Egypt and Syria—and the willingness of these states, along with older American friends such as Saudi Arabia and Jordan, to accept their roles as America's clients in the region. Oil has not in fact given Saudi Arabia or the Gulf states power to dictate policy to the United States, but the complex nature of relations between this country and its Arab allies, and the nature of American interests in the region, have combined to render the United States more sensitive to the internal needs of the Arab states. This has meant a concern for the stability of regimes whose economies have shown an alarming deterioration. It has meant recognition of the political imperatives of governments whose military situation has been altered for the worse since 1973. That this combination of factors has sharply curtailed the capacity of the "confrontation" states to wage war is something not lost on Israel or on the United States.

While the result of this has been effectively to lessen the pressure by Israel's neighbors to accede to their de-

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mands for the restoration of territory—a situation that is even more acute in the case of the Palestinians and the PLO after their reverses in Lebanon—it has not diminished the need or the desire for such movement on the part of the Arab states. Nor has this post-1973 balance of power in the region been ignored by the United States in its current strategy with respect to Israel and the Palestinians.

If the United States appears sensitive to the repeatedly stated demands by various Arab governments for Israeli withdrawal, it is less out of a concern for either Palestinian self-determination or Arab dignity than out of a direct concern for the stability of those regimes with which it is now deeply engaged. Hence, its reluctance to accept the continuation of the status quo that has become Israeli policy. Such is the basis of the conflict of interest which may lead to an increased tension between the United States and Israel.

For the present, it must be evident to Israeli leaders of all political parties that both the Palestinians and the Arab states are seriously impaired in their military capabilities and, therefore, in their willingness to make war. One may speculate then on the response to American pressure—such as it is—on Israel to withdraw. One may also wish to reconsider the contrast between the waffling ambiguity of the Labor alignment, or so it is described, with respect to a settlement with the Arabs and the unambiguous position taken by the Likud. Israel cannot afford seriously to offend, let alone to sever its ties with, the United States, yet its perceptions of possibilities and pressures in the Middle East inevitably differ from those of the United States. An avowedly hard-line policy on the question of a settlement, which does not materially differ from that of the previous policy of the Labor alignment, represents both the ideological commitment of the Likud and its supporters, and a sober estimate of current military and political realities in the Arab world. One may believe that the long-range dangers inherent in such a policy should argue against its adoption, because it is unrealistic to assume that the present situation of the Arab world will remain unchanged; but that is another matter.

What has been suggested, then, is that the current balance of forces between Israel and the Arab states must also be considered in any review of the present Israeli election and its larger meaning. This is only one factor of many to be considered in evaluating the defection from Labor and the emergence of the Likud, but it places the results of the election in a perspective which is broader than that currently being offered. At the least it suggests a line of questioning that may be fruitful in an attempt to understand the Israeli election and the dynamics of the current phase of the Middle East conflict. □

HIGH TENSION IN THE ENERGY DEBATE

The Clamshell Reaction

HARVEY WASSERMAN

Seabrook, N.H.

On April 30, more than 2,000 marchers descended on the nuclear construction site here. Thanks to their numbers, their discipline, coolness and determination—but thanks also to the ill-considered response of the state's highest authorities—this demonstration by aroused citizens will almost certainly be remembered as a watershed event in the direct-action politics of the 1970s. It was the third organized occupation of the site of the $2 billion, 2,300-megawatt atomic plant proposed by the Public Service Company (PSC) of New Hampshire, and it received worldwide attention.

The first march was on August 1, last year, when the Clamshell Alliance, a loose coalition of anti-nuclear groups from around New England, staged a rally less than a mile from the site (see Wasserman: *The Nation*, September 11, 1976). Six hundred braved a rainstorm to attend; eighteen occupiers, all natives of New Hampshire, marched onto the site, carrying seedlings and saplings, and were arrested by local police.

Three weeks later, the alliance staged a second occupation in blazing summer heat. Fifteen hundred came to that rally, and this time 180 marched onto the site. The occupiers—who included representatives from all six New England states—had been specially trained in the tactics of nonviolent civil disobedience, and were organized into "affinity groups" of eight to twenty members.

They marched onto the site without violence, were quickly arrested by New Hampshire State Troopers and held overnight at the nearby Portsmouth National Guard Armory. The following morning, the occupiers were released on personal recognizance bond.

By then, the Clamshell Alliance, though barely a month old, had become the most controversial anti-nuclear group on the American scene. It served public notice that patience with the days of lobbying and legal intervention had come to an end.

A third occupation of the Seabrook site was scheduled for the fall, but for complex reasons, the organization

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shifted gears and chose instead an energy fair and mass bike ride which, on the weekend of October 23, attracted more than 3,000 participants to the Hampton Beach State Park, 2 miles across the marsh from the plant site. At the fair, the alliance set April 30, 1977, as the date for the third occupation, and then settled in for a long winter of organizing.

In the spring the anti-nuclear forces were given a strong boost by town meeting victories in Seabrook and six other towns along the New Hampshire seacoast. Seabrook had voted in January 1976 to oppose construction of the plant; at its 1977 town meeting, it voted to ban transportation of radioactive materials through its streets. It was joined by all its contiguous New Hampshire neighbors and, in early May, Salisbury, Mass., which has a common border with Seabrook on the south, also voted against the plant, thus closing the circle.

Meanwhile, the local Clamshell groups worked toward the April 30th occupation. Each chapter conducted training sessions aimed at improving relationships within the group, as well as instruction in role-playing and legal background to prepare people for the occupation itself.

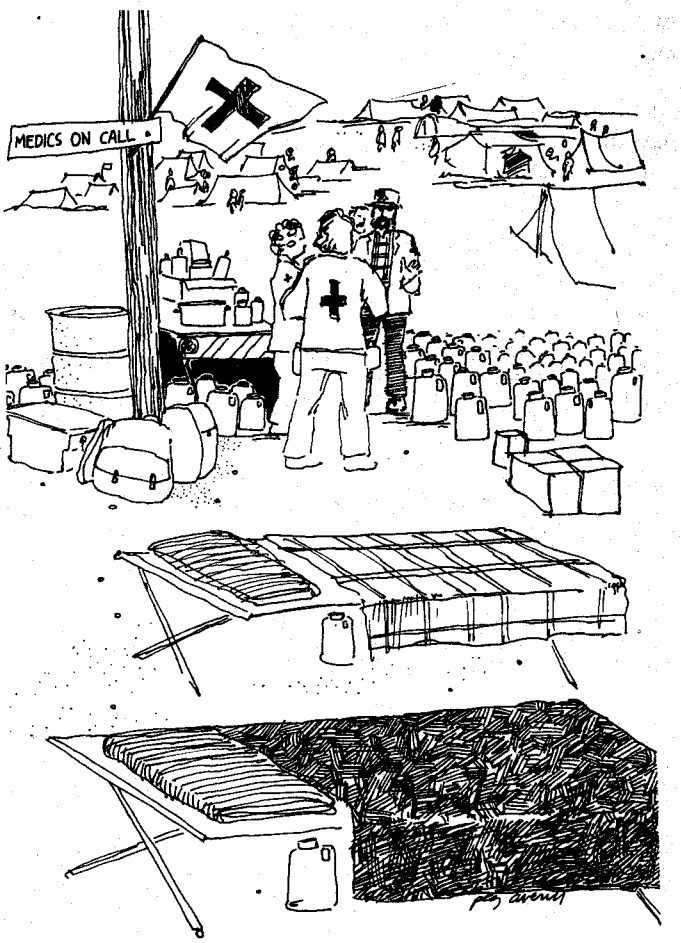
But the training was designed also to educate people on the issues of nonviolence and nuclear power, in the expectation that the groups would continue to operate after the occupation. The sessions were apparently so attractive that scores of people joined local groups without actually intending to occupy at Seabrook.

By the middle of the week of April 23, the alliance announced that it could count on at least 1,000 occupiers, and that it had trained at least 1,800. While the organization raced to solidify last-minute arrangements, the realization that something big was about to happen mobilized the media and began attracting scores of additional occupiers.

The news also attracted the frustration and wrath of the nuclear plant's chief backers, New Hampshire's arch-conservative Gov. Meldrim Thomson, and his patron, William Loeb, publisher of the strident *Manchester Union-Leader*.

Together, Thomson and Loeb used the week before the occupation to create an atmosphere absent from this country since the days of Vietnam. Labeling alliance members "Communists" and "perverts," the Governor and the newspaper charged that, despite the group's public commitment to nonviolence, the occupation was being used as a "cover for terrorism." The real intent of the action, they said, was to bring on bloodshed, and they soon produced an "inside report" from the ultra-rightist U.S. Labor Party to "prove" their case.

Meanwhile, a crucial behind-the-scenes struggle was going on between Thomson and State Police Commander Col. Paul Doyon. Doyon, who had handled the August 22nd arrests, was given a full account of the plans for April 30 from the Clamshell Alliance. Much to Loeb and Thomson's chagrin, he apparently decided it would be wiser to allow the occupiers onto the site and arrest them there than to try blocking them at the edge of the property. A confrontation at the plant's border would have snarled traffic on Route 1 for hours, if not days,



Medical Center on the Seabrook Site

and might have degenerated into real ugliness.

It soon became apparent that the shouting by Thomson and Loeb was aimed as much at Doyon as at the Clamshell Alliance. Then on Thursday, two days before the occupation, Thomson met with alliance members Cathy Wolff and Robin Read. "I think the meeting blew the Governor's mind," said Read afterward. "He suddenly had to confront the fact that we are also human beings, and that we were, in fact, committed to nonviolence."

By the clear, pleasant morning of April 30, there remained hardly a trace of the hysteria that had dominated the state's headlines for a week. Several hundred new Clamshell recruits arrived for final training sessions, and there was no counter-demonstration or police resistance in sight.

Occupiers had been arriving from Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts and elsewhere in the Northeast, many of them camping overnight. The bulk of them were in three camp grounds to the west of the plant, and they came together at the main access road, used each morning by the site's laborers. By 3 P.M. this "western route" contingent numbered more than 1,300; accompanied by some 200 members of the press, they marched without incident down the half-mile asphalt road and onto the site.

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When all the groups had converged on the hot, dusty parking lot at the belly of the site, the occupation force numbered well over 2,000. Singing, chanting and in the best of spirits, the occupiers unpacked their knapsacks and tents, organized themselves into neighborhoods, dug latrines, and settled in for the night.

While most of the occupiers went about the business of living, a more or less permanent conclave of elected representatives took root at the southwest corner of the campsite. Among other things, this decision-making body passed ordinances against the construction of nuclear power plants or the transportation of radioactive materials within "town" limits. It also sent messages of solidarity to the workers and environmentalists of the world, and to the 3,000-person rally being held across the marsh at the Hampton Beach State Park by the Concerned Citizens of Seabrook and Hampton Falls, an organization of local people opposed to the plant.

At about 2 P.M. on May 1, Colonel Doyon and Governor Thomson appeared at the east side of the parking lot to meet with six chosen representatives of Occupation City and ask that they vacate the premises. Colonel Doyon offered the use of school buses chartered by the state to facilitate the departure.

Elizabeth Boardman, a long-time associate of the American Friends Service Committee, which has played a crucial role in the growth of the Clamshell, told the Colonel, "We are all mutually sorry. But our purpose was not simply to draw attention to the occupation and capture media attention but to stop all construction of the proposed nuclear power plant."

Doyon replied that he, too, was "very sorry," and at 3:09 read a notice over a series of police loudspeakers that everyone who did not leave the site would be arrested. A body of New Hampshire, Maine, Vermont, Connecticut and Rhode Island State Troopers then emerged from nearby warehouses to begin the arrests. Massachusetts Gov. Michael Dukakis was the only New

JOHNNY CARSON SETS US STRAIGHT

Resistance to the spread of nuclear power plants is generally believed to be a cause dear to the "elites" of the environmental movement, but unpopular with the masses whose jobs are held to depend on plentiful cheap energy. What follows is a slightly condensed version of a satirical monologue by Johnny Carson on The Tonight Show *(May 10), an NBC TV program that reaches an average audience of 10 million. It is also a rare example of television making fun of itself. Carson delivered this in the guise of "Floyd Turbo," an ill-informed character who comes on the show from time to time to deliver "editorial rebuttals."*

Announcer: Recently this network broadcast an editorial in which our station, WXYZZ, came out against the installation of nuclear plants in heavily populated cities. As you know it's our policy to invite qualified spokesmen to speak in rebuttal. Here tonight with the opposing view in favor of nuclear plants is Floyd R. Turbo. Mr. Turbo?

Carson: My name is Floyd R. Turbo, American. I welcome this opportunity to come into your homes and speak from your box. This station is starting to steam me. Recently, these wieners gave off with an editorial . . . saying that we should stop building nuclear power plants until we make sure they are safe. . . .

Put me down as one American who favors building nuclear plants. I say nuclear energy plants are safe. Each and every one of us must get into the fight to have nuclear power plants so we can make a better world for ourselves and our posterior. The United States needs a bunch more nuclear plants. I say put one on every street corner next to a McDonald's. That way you can get something to eat and the food will always be hot. So what if people begin to glow a little bit? At least we won't be faced with the question of not knowing where our children are at night. I say we should trust science. Remember, science has given us cyclamates, saccharine and DDT, and remember how well DDT works. . . . DDT worked so well that now we don't have to use it any more because it's working everywhere, in the rivers, in our food, and in our lungs. And what's all this fuss about plutonium? How can something named after a Disney character be dangerous?

So what if an atomic plant blows up? The people who say that, they are afraid to die. I'm not afraid to die because all my life I have lived by the good book, the American Legion magazine. . . . They say if there is a leak in a nuclear power plant the radiation can kill you. Nix! Radiation cannot kill you because it contains absolutely no cholesterol. They say atomic radi-i-ation can hurt your reproductive organs. My answer is, so can a hockey stick. But we don't stop building them.

I told my wife that there was a chance that radiation might hurt my reproductive organs but she said in her opinion it is a small price to pay.

Let us assume for the sake of argument that there is an atomic explosion, just for the fun of it. It would have very little bad effect, especially here in Los Angeles where we are shielded by a protective layer of smog. . . . Sure, nuclear leaks will affect the forest animals. So what if a deer grows up with two rear ends? They're easier to shoot and that's what America is all about.

What do they expect us to use for fuel, buffalo chips? Now, these jerks want to use solar energy for electricity. Doesn't that take the cake? How do they expect me to plug my drill into the sun? I'd need a very big step-ladder. . . .

Some people are even talking about wind power. Phooey! Who wants windmills on their house? Next thing you know we'll be wearing wooden Dutch shoes and sucking cheese all day. So in my simple way, I'm asking that you support nuclear energy. Remember, being an American means being powerful, proud and pushy and in conclusion let me finish by ending. . . .

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England chief executive to refuse Thomson's request for police aid. He was, he explained, "unconvinced" that the Seabrook occupation posed a significant threat to the security of the region.

The arrests proceeded smoothly, if slowly. Piling people onto chartered school buses and into National Guard troop carriers, the patrolmen took more than twelve hours to haul everyone away. Some of the occupiers who had packed up their gear in the afternoon unpacked it again and reopened their tents to wait through the long hours of the night. Many were not arrested until dawn.

Meanwhile, a major bottleneck had been created at the Portsmouth Armory, where those arrested were being processed. The first batch was booked and released on personal recognizance.

But suddenly, late in the afternoon, Thomson swooped in by helicopter. Hampton District Court clerk Mac Hamilton later testified that he had come to the armory with a box full of personal recognizance forms, but that a change of procedure went into effect with the arrival of the Governor. Now the rule was $1,500 bail, which nearly all the prisoners were unwilling or unable to meet.

Three District Court judges soon arrived at the armory, and a number of "guilty" pleas resulted in some occupiers being hauled off to prison. At least two contempt charges were leveled in the course of the night. "It was a travesty," said Attorney Emmanuel Krasner of Rochester, N.H., who had been engaged by the Clamshell to represent those occupying the site, and who had been present most of the night. "The state violated just about every basic right in the Constitution."

When the sun finally set on May 2, some 1,400 detainees were being held under makeshift conditions in four National Guard armories around the state. Some had spent up to fifteen hours in buses and in the backs of the National Guard troop carriers, as well as in closed, stuffy semi-trailers while awaiting arraignment.

Many of the prisoners were held for three days and more, without beds, telephone access, or more than perfunctory legal counsel. Friends, family and the external Clamshell support system were unable to learn who had been arrested, where they were being held, or what the conditions of confinement were like. "It was a classic police-state situation," said Anna Gyorgy, a Clamshell support worker. "It was like 1,400 people had been 'disappeared' by the state."

Conflicting reports soon trickled out as to conditions in the armories. Nearly 700 occupiers were being held in the Manchester Armory alone, and overcrowding seemed a problem at all four. There were reports of communicable disease, of one outbreak of food poisoning, of difficult, if not impossible, access to telephones, and of irregular access to outsiders. The state remained uncooperative throughout the entire two-week detainment, and a complete accounting of who was being held where was finally obtained only after great difficulty.

Both the alliance organization and the body of occupiers were caught unprepared for the extended detention, the group expectation having been for immediate release on personal recognizance. But while a steady stream of occupiers bailed out, it rapidly became clear that a very large core was more than willing to remain "indefinitely." "Many of us felt that the bail system is unjust to begin with," said Cathy Wolff, who was held in Somersworth. "The process favors those with money. We also felt bail was unjust in this case because it was being used as a punishment instead of insurance that we would appear for trial. We weren't happy about costing the taxpayers all that money, but we figured we'd be saving everybody money if what we did helped stop the nuke."

The detention hit a legal low point on Thursday, May 5, when the first of the prisoners were brought out for their District Court trials. Murray Rosenblith, 26, a Brooklynite and staff member of the radical pacifist WIN magazine, was brought along with sixteen other defendants from Somersworth to stand trial before Judge Alfred Casassa at Hampton District Court.

As expected, Casassa found Rosenblith guilty of criminal trespass, and then sentenced him to fifteen days at hard labor and a $200 fine, with the jail sentence suspended pending appeal on $200 bond.

The verdict and sentence both seemed routine. Therefore it was a shock when, after the lunch break, state Atty. Gen. David Souter, swooped up to the court in a limousine and appealed to Casassa to raise the ante. Speaking for half an hour, Souter told Casassa that "giving the defendants a suspended sentence is tantamount to no punishment at all." The Superior Court, where the cases would be appealed, was already running behind schedule. "Most likely," Souter complained, "these cases will never clear the docket there." As a result, "justice can only be done by imposing sentence right now." As a guarantee, he added, no appeal bail should be allowed; sentences should begin to be served immediately.

Defense Attorney Krasner responded by pointing out that not one of the August 22nd defendants had defaulted on his or her personal recognizance bond, that the occupiers clearly intended to stand trial, and that the refusal of bail or imposition of high bail was tantamount to punitive detention. Most of the Superior Court trials would be scheduled weeks—even months—in the future, far beyond the fifteen-day period set out in the sentences. To impose the penalties now, or to set high or no bail, Krassner argued, was to deny the defendants their right to appeal.

Casassa, apparently persuaded by Souter, imposed unsuspended sentences on the next sixteen defendants, and demanded a $500 bond. He then called Rosenblith back into the courtroom, lifted the suspension on his sentence and upped his bail. "It was quite amazing," said the pacifist writer. "At Portsmouth we were told we would be released on personal recognizance. Then it turned into $100. This morning it was $200, and this afternoon it's $500. What next?"

By Sunday, May 8, the number of occupiers remaining in the armories had dropped below 1,000, as several hundred who had not yet been called to trial availed

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themselves of the chance to bail out at the original $100 mark. The Governor announced, "We are winning the battle of Seabrook." His optimism was premature. For one thing, it had become clear that the prolonged detention gave the Seabrook occupation moral weight and dramatic impact it would never have carried as a mere weekend confrontation. For another, blame for the arraignment foul-up and the expense of imprisonment (it was costing up to $50,000 per day) was being laid at the Governor's doorstep. Local newspapers, as well as the *Boston Globe* and *The New York Times*, noting the implications of Souter's appearance at the Hampton court, editorialized for the prisoners' release.

By Monday, May 9, ACLU lawyers Nancy Gertner and John Reinstein were in Federal District Court at Concord, in front of Justice Hugh Bownes, demanding immediate emptying of the armories because of the physical conditions there. The suit challenged the use of bail for punitive purposes, and included a class-action damage suit demanding $5,000 per arrest and $5,000 per detainee per day. Based on the irregularities of the detentions, the suit drew heavily on precedent set by actions following the May 1, 1970 arrests of more than 13,000 anti-war demonstrators in Washington, D.C. A preliminary ruling (now on appeal) granted more than $1 million in awards in that case. The 1977 Seabrook suit, which grew by as much as $5 million per day, would soon rise well above $50 million.

As the second week of detention dragged on, a nerve-racking chess game developed between the Clamshell and the State House, with the National Guard, the court system and the taxpayers holding decisive sway. Inside the armories, the occupiers established a cordial and fruitful relationship with the Guard. "We treated them like fellow human beings," said Rennie Cushing, a Clamshell organizer detained in the Manchester Armory. "A lot of the Guard were against the nuke to begin with, and a lot more were against it by the time the occupation was over. I think we broke new ground, and if I were Governor Thomson I'd think twice about relying on them to keep us off that site next time." Personal relationships reached a point, in fact, where Gertner and Reinstein subpoenaed two Guardsmen to federal court to serve as character witnesses for the occupiers.

Meanwhile, as it became evident that a large segment of the occupiers had no intention of bailing out, the cost of detaining them became a political hot potato. The Rockingham County Commissioners announced in mid-week that they would refuse to pay costs of imprisoning convicted occupiers, and that they would sue the Governor if the county were ordered to pay for the armory detentions.

Finally, negotiations began between Rockingham County Prosecutor Carlton Eldridge and the alliance. After a series of meetings, an agreement was reached whereby Eldridge undertook to ask the judges in his district to grant personal recognizance if the occupiers would accept mass trials in return. It would, after all, be the Rockingham system that would bear the burden of trying the Seabrook 1,414. And with public outcry mounting, Eldridge seemed eager to settle.

On Thursday, May 12, he and alliance negotiators signed an accord that was quickly approved by the detainees at the Somersworth and Dover Armories, as well as by the inmates at Portsmouth, which had been reopened for prisoners earlier in the week.

At Manchester and Concord, however, serious objections arose, and at their insistence negotiations were reopened. Finally, at 5:30 A.M. on Friday, an elaborate compromise was reached which included provisions for a few individual trials, at least one public jury trial, refund arrangements for those who had already bailed out, and special conditions for noncooperators. "It was a nerve-racking head-to-head," says Charles Light, one of the key negotiators, "but I guess the weight of all those people was just too much for the state to carry."

Thus at 9:30 A.M. the first busload of occupiers arrived at the Hampton District Court, and a process began that would carry well into the night and would ultimately result in the release on personal recognizance of the remaining 541 detainees.

As the third Seabrook occupation thus drew to a media-saturated close, nuclear opponents found they had made a stunning impression on the world environmental scene. The occupation and prolonged detention had focused international attention on the nuclear issue as perhaps nothing else could have done, and had driven home the point that thousands of citizens were now willing to face arrest and imprisonment in order to call a halt to atomic reactor construction.

If the occupation proved the anti-nuclear movement had reached a new level of maturity and mass appeal, it also seemed a powerful testament to the tactics of nonviolence. For the third time the Clamshell Alliance had staged a mass civil disobedience action without a single incidence of violence or serious bodily harm. The tactics of peaceful action had opened the gates to the site when any other approach seemed certain to have kept them closed. It also maintained for the occupation an overwhelming base of credibility and popular support against which the Thomson administration was simply unable to respond.

Now, in the wake of its third tenfold increase in size, the alliance faces a critical period. Direct-action environmentalism has clearly accelerated from a small assembly of local groups to a full-scale movement, and with that must inevitably come all the growing pains of factionalism and organizational strain.

Meanwhile, the Seabrook plant continues to stagger along under regulatory, financial and political difficulties. The Environmental Protection Agency has not yet decided whether it will approve the cooling system for the plant (which could be disastrous for the shellfish of the area); and until it does the banks will not advance the money needed to go forward with construction. More and more it appears a project doomed to an early death. If somehow it survives, Clamshell and the growing direct-action anti-nuclear movement around the country are almost certain to make Seabrook the critical battleground of nuclear energy. The April 30th occupation was, after

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all, accompanied by anti-nuclear actions at Browns Ferry, Ala., San Luis Obispo, Calif., Portland, Ore., Rocky Flats, Colo., Wintersburg, Ariz., Zion, Ill., Fulton, Mo., Pittsburgh and Three Mile Island, Pa., and at Montpelier, Vt. In their wake has come the Abalone Alliance, a statewide anti-nuclear group in California; and the Oyster Shell Alliance, aimed at a nuke under construction and another planned in the Mississippi Delta region of Louisiana. A Great Plains Alliance has been active in Missouri for some time, and it seems probable that other groups dedicated to direct action against nuclear power will be popping up throughout the summer and fall.

If there should be a fourth occupation at Seabrook, it might well become a mass civil disobedience action the like of which this country has not seen for quite some time. Full-scale occupations have already occurred in Europe, where 28,000 Swiss, French and West German citizens occupied a nuclear construction site at Wyhl, West Germany, and where more than 20,000 French nuclear opponents tried the same thing at Malville, near Lyons. The former resulted in an on-site occupation lasting more than a year, and was ended only by cancellation of the plant; the latter presaged a widespread upheaval that has raised questions about the future of nuclear energy in France. Mass anti-nuclear opposition has also moved to civil disobedience in Italy, Switzerland and Japan; it is threatening in Sweden, Spain and Australia.

What comes next in the United States will depend in large part on the Carter administration, and the depth of its commitment to what it has termed "the last resort" in the energy crisis.

But what is now clear from the grass roots of New England is that the social movement which has developed on the issue has chosen a "last resort" of its own, and that movement is unlikely to slow down until nuclear power plants become no more than a bad memory. □

California's Fight for the Sun

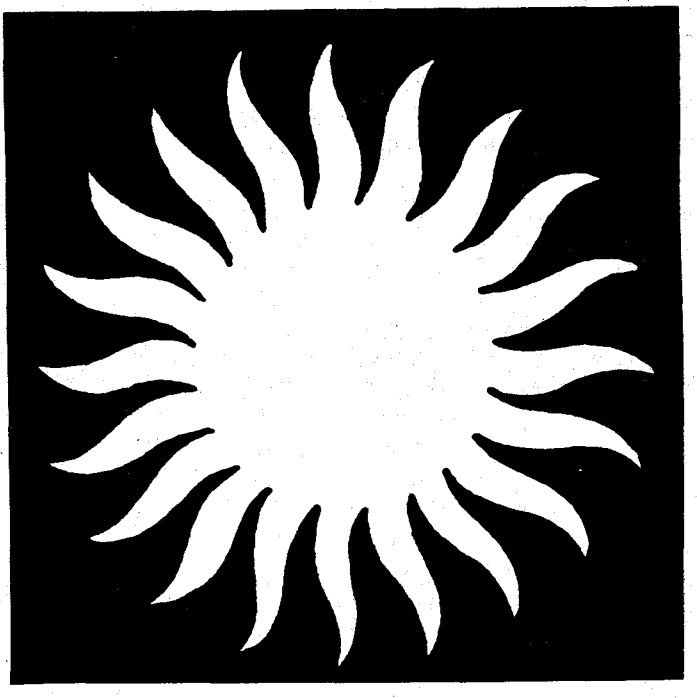
FRED BRANFMAN

A little-noticed energy battle now being waged in California may affect Americans far more than the President's widely publicized energy plan. For the first time in history, a major utility has laid plans to begin marketing solar energy. Operation Sunflower, as the utility plan is known, is now in hearing before the state Public Utilities Commission (PUC). A verdict is expected this summer.

Consumer advocates, bitterly opposed to Sunflower, have proposed comprehensive public alternatives to the corporate energy plan. For example, a surprising coalition of small business people, progressives and officials, including Governor Brown's energy adviser, have endorsed a proposed public solar development bank called SolarCal. The debate, basically, is over who shall own the sun.

At stake in part is our energy future. Although it places a welcome emphasis on conservation, and gives a nod to the sun, the President's energy plan continues the energy crisis by strengthening oil company control of the country's energy resources. His approach will therefore accelerate the transfer of wealth from the public to the oil companies, heightening joblessness and inflation. His proposal to raise to $1.75 per 1,000 cubic feet the price of natural gas, for example, is a *threefold* increase over the 52¢ price of just two years ago, a *tenfold* increase over the 17¢ price in 1970. By leaving oil company power intact, moreover, the plan insures that the industry will raise prices still higher, while foisting upon us even more expensive liquefied natural gas (LNG), $4 to $6 per 1,000 cubic feet, and nuclear energy (whose plant construction costs rose 244 percent between 1969 and 1975).

The only major energy resource not yet in monopoly hands is the sun. And contrary to oil company propaganda, solar energy is already commercially feasible, able to supply vast amounts of energy. A recent report by the California State Energy Commission states that "Solar space and water heating in both residence and commercial establishments is ready for commercialization [and] economical."



Space and water heating consumed almost half of California's natural gas in 1975 (798 of 1,680 billion cubic feet). The sun, according to a recent study by the NASA-supported Jet Propulsion Laboratory, could supply fully *two-thirds* of this need, thus freeing up to 530 billion cubic feet of nonpolluting natural gas for use by industry. And, since natural gas is priced below the

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cost of OPEC-priced oil, this would be an enormous saving for California consumers, and would create jobs for California workers.

All told, solar space and water heating, now "ready for commercialization" and "economical" could have displaced fully 32 percent of California's 1975 natural gas consumption. Solar electricity, still needing a vast infusion of research and development funds, has an even greater potential. Solar energy is also the only energy resource whose price is going down. Jim Piper of Orange County, for example, is among the world's largest solar manufacturers (some 400 systems installed to date). He reports that he is now installing systems at a third of what they cost only a few years ago, and he expects them to go far lower.

The dream of a solar energy future will be killed, however, if the energy corporations gain control over the sun. They will inevitably peg the cost of solar "fuel" to the skyrocketing prices of their other fuels, thereby delaying its use indefinitely. If we are ever to develop this safe, cheap, job-producing energy, it can come about only through *public* development of the sun.

The issues involved in the Sunflower debate, moreover, go beyond energy; what is also at stake is the structure of our economy. Solar energy lends itself to development by small businesses and cooperatives, plumbers and carpenters, sheet-metal workers and builders. A public entity formed to lend large sums to consumers and solar manufacturers could spark a new, democratic, decentralized solar industry in this country. Public solar development thus offers the first serious possibility in this century of reversing the trend to monopoly control of the economy. A decentralized solar industry, under public control, could become a model for transforming other sectors of the economy. Given such stakes, it is not surprising that so much emotion has been generated by Operation Sunflower. Both sides see the question of utility entry into solar marketing as symbolic of fundamental economy choices.

Operation Sunflower is a project of Southern California Gas. The utility is asking PUC approval for an $11 million rate increase to install 315 solar systems in homes, shops and factories by 1981. The company would use the $11 million to buy solar systems from small businesses, then install them on homes selected from among volunteers who would agree to let the utility monitor their "energy habits" for the five years of the project. The utilities would retain ownership of the systems, and use the information gathered to determine post-1981 rates should they decide to continue solar involvement.

Critics protest that the gas company's major motive in Sunflower is to monopolize the market, delaying solar power by keeping prices as high as possible. Consumer activist John Geesman calls Sunflower an historic attempt to create a new monopoly, likening it to the creation of the Standard Oil trust in the early 1900s. Jim Piper is even more blunt. "The utilities are trying to control the sun," says Piper, "and if they get this rate increase they'll put me and other small businessmen like me out of business."

A key point raised by Sunflower opponents is that a strong, decentralized, widespread solar energy industry would very likely put the utilities out of business. Their income is determined as a percentage of their capital investment, and the introduction of a solar alternative would remove justification for utility expansion. This, in turn, would cause them to default on debts. As a result, it is argued, Southern California Gas and other utilities must stop the widespread introduction of solar power or die.

The tiny size and high cost of Sunflower is seen as proof of the gas company's lack of commitment to making inexpensive solar energy available to the public. Consumers would pay an average of $40,000 for each of Sunflower's solar systems. Jim Piper reports that this is five to ten times more than he would charge for equivalent work, pointing to his $280,000 fee for solar systems he is now installing in a 254-unit apartment complex in the city of Ventura. He also notes that the gas company will have installed only 315 systems by 1981, *less* than the number of systems his one small company has already installed, with no financial assistance at all.

The best gauge of the gas company's real interest in solar energy, however, is the comparison between its $11 million commitment for Sunflower and its $3 *billion* commitment to liquefied natural gas. Southern California Gas has contracted with Pertamina, the Indonesian State Energy Monopoly, and with oil companies in south Alaska to spend roughly $20 billion over the next twenty years for LNG. Its plans for this technique, among the largest in the world, call for construction of major liquefication facilities abroad and in California, the purchase of more than a dozen huge tankers, and millions of dollars for new pipeline.

However, a recent study by the Jet Propulsion Laboratory shows that $20 billion invested in solar space and water heating could displace from 253 billion to 427 billion cubic feet of natural gas a year. That is, were the $20 billion committed to solar power rather than LNG, enough normal natural gas could be diverted to industry to make LNG unnecessary.

The public advantages of making the investment in solar energy are very substantial. Most of the $20 billion for LNG is destined to leave California—going to Indonesia's military regime, to Belgian and Texan shipbuilders and multinational oil companies. Investment in solar energy would remain in California. The money, moreover, would go to hundreds of thousands of people—from carpenters to plumbers to sheet-metal workers to maintenance people—rather than to highly capital-intensive ships and plants.

Solar energy would also, of course, be far safer than LNG, which is only slightly less dangerous than nuclear energy. An LNG explosion could produce a toxic cloud occupying cubic miles of sky and capable, if ignited, of creating a fireball that would destroy everything in its path. Even pro-nuclear advocate Edward Teller urged extreme caution with LNG at a state hearing last year, stating that "the total amount of money spent on [LNG] safety considerations is approximately 1 percent of the money that has been spent on the safety of nuclear reactors," while "the complexities in the two cases are comparable."

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The fact that LNG is being considered at all, given the obvious public benefits of solar energy, discloses the reality behind the struggle to control the sun. Though the argument is often couched in economic or technical terms, the real question is political. Some of the state's most powerful interests will benefit greatly from LNG; they stand to make little or nothing from solar energy. One of the state's major power brokers, for example, is former Gov. Edmund ("Pat") Brown. He has been a tireless proponent of LNG, pushing it both publicly and privately. Consumer activist Tim Brick has recently revealed that Brown also owns a 31 percent share in Perta Oil Marketing—the American branch of the increasingly shaky Pertamina, which desperately needs an influx of capital from the sale of LNG.

Pacific Gas and Electric, the state's largest utility, is also fully committed to LNG. Together with its fifty-fifty partner, Southern California Gas, PG&E has been exercising its considerable political leverage for LNG. Sources on the California Assembly's Energy Committee, which recently issued a devastating anti-LNG report, say that even they are forced to support LNG publicly "because of the political realities."

These "political realities" have led a growing number of activists to believe that their pressure should be built around demands for public alternatives, rather than simply opposition to LNG, nuclear energy or Sunflower. The goal is to confront legislators with a public demand for proposals like SolarCal that will outweigh pressure generated by campaign contributions from the special interests.

The SolarCal proposal, originally launched by Tom Hayden of the Campaign for Economic Democracy, would set up a solar development bank to lend money to consumers and small business people, thus reducing the "front-end" costs of installing solar equipment. In addition, SolarCal would function as a kind of "public entrepreneur," carrying out public-education campaigns, certifying solar business people, and leading lobbying campaigns to pass related legislation, from sun-rights laws to property-tax exemptions for solar equipment.

SolarCal would avoid funding through tax increases. Instead it would be financed through self-liquidating revenue bonds, "Solar bonds," or by rate increases won by competing with the utilities before the PUC. From the consumer's point of view, SolarCal would cost far less than would otherwise go to the utilities for expensive nuclear and LNG schemes.

The mass support for solar energy (a recent *Newsweek* poll showed 63 to 27 percent support) is a sign that SolarCal proponents may succeed. As the costs of other energy sources continue to rise, moreover, proposals like SolarCal stand a good chance of being seen as the "realistic" alternatives.

For the immediate future, the fate of utility solar development is still in doubt. Consumer protests over Sunflower appear to have made some impression, with former proponents of utility involvement, like Energy Com. Ron Doctor, now opposing Sunflower. But Doctor still works actively for "good" utility plans, opposing Sunflower only because it is so inadequate. The consensus at the PUC seems to be that utilities will eventually be let into solar energy, provided they are not allowed to "monopolize" the market.

Interestingly enough, however, even those favoring utility involvement in solar development find themselves also supporting public alternatives like SolarCal. The prevailing attitude seems to be that voiced by the Energy Commission's solar division chief, Alec Jenkins, who says, "Anything that's for solar I'm for." Therefore, whatever happens with Sunflower this summer, the real test will come in the fall as public advocates and progressives begin a campaign to win public support for a large-scale agency like SolarCal. It is too early to say that SolarCal will win. A lot depends on the amount of opposition put up by the oil companies and utilities. It is certain, however, that Operation Sunflower has sparked the beginning of a new phase in California economic and political history. □

'WHEN THE PRESIDENT DOES IT . . .'

WHAT THE TAPES REALLY REVEAL

IRVING LOUIS HOROWITZ

The Frost-Nixon interviews have produced few surprises. The substance of the record remains unaltered, and the Nixon style, artfully characterized by James David Barber as dominated by an overwhelming emphasis on rhetorical manipulation and impression management, has become more transparent over the years. But the interviews did at least cast light on one big Watergate mystery: when Alexander P. Butterfield, former Presidential appointments secretary, informed the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives that tape recordings were made of all official White House discussions, the President stored the tapes, and after exhausting a myriad of legal maneuvers, complied with the February 25, 1974 order of Judge John J. Sirica, by turning over, albeit in bowdlerized form, transcripts made from them to the House committee. Why did he not, in the memorable phraseology of William Safire, choose to make a bonfire on the White House lawn?

The Nixon "gamble" involved a belief that the transcripts were so ambiguous that they were susceptible to various interpretations, thus establishing the technical in-

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nocence of the President. He also undoubtedly felt that partial compliance with Judge Sirica's order would divide the Judiciary Committee. Indeed, it was only by a vote of 20 to 18 that the committee decided to inform the President that he had failed to meet the terms of the subpoena. Finally, Nixon clearly believed that this gesture of compliance would hold in line slightly more than the magical third of the Senators who would ultimately be called upon to vote in impeachment hearings. And going public with the transcripts obviously placed pressure on Senators and Representatives, who would presumably rely on the legitimacy of the system itself and heed the remarkable willingness of the American public to ride out any crisis with, rather than against, the President.

In the light of former President Nixon's proclivities to stretch his tax privileges to the limit of the law, he undoubtedly felt that the tapes would take their place along with the state papers as a tax-exempt item in the future Nixon library that was already in the planning stages. Finally, we are all aware of Nixon's sense of history. Having already weathered and written about his earlier crises, he could draw on tapes for any analysis of the seventh—or eighth, or ninth—crisis of his political career.

But while these considerations, in combination and permutation, explain why he handed over the tapes in mid-1974, they do not explain his failure to destroy the tapes in mid-1973, as soon as their very existence became known. The President might have called immediately for the retrieval of all tapes in the White House archives, had them destroyed forthwith, and issued an Executive memorandum to the effect that they were never intended to serve as anything other than a transient, thirty-day check against White House conversations; that it was standard operating procedure to shred these tapes, or erase them as the case might be, in order to avoid their illicit use and to keep them from the hands of potential blackmailers. But it seems that, except for the passing suggestion of Haldeman, never seriously pursued, no one close to the President appreciated the volatile nature of the transcripts and/or tapes.

No doubt, their destruction would have created a temporary uproar and a further crisis of confidence in the Presidency, but it would also have deprived the opposition, the impeachment forces, of the famous "smoking gun." It is impossible to believe that, lacking such hard evidence, the House Judiciary Committee would have recommended impeachment proceedings to the Senate. Of course, this destruct ploy could have been used only within a very short time after the existence of the tapes became known. But why did it not happen? Why was the evidence allowed to pile up, necessitating Nixon's resignation in disgrace?

I submit that the answer resides not in the ignorance of Nixon's advisers, the testimony of John Dean, the pursuit of the evidence by Archibald Cox or Leon Jaworski, or with any person other than the President himself. It was Nixon's strange dual ideological belief in the imperial Presidency that did him in. And this was made possible by the peculiar character of the Presidency itself, which permitted Nixon to behave as Commander in Chief in the context of an undeclared war in Vietnam, rather than as President in a peacetime context.

Ironically, a similar dualism between roles was what compromised the Presidency of Lyndon B. Johnson. Never have we had a President more capable, or a Commander in Chief more inept, than Lyndon Johnson. Nixon to the contrary, broadened the "Commander" aspect of the Presidency to such a degree that even domestic decisions were ultimately made on the basis of his role as Commander in Chief. It was this belief in a Presidency beyond the law, in the siege mentality that is permissible only in a state of wartime emergency, that deluded Nixon into believing that the tapes would not hurt him.

When David Frost raised the matter of the plan which Nixon's attorney, Thomas C. Huston, submitted to the President (and which the President approved) for spying on domestic dissidents, he elicited this trans-legal view that Nixon took of Presidential prerogatives.

> *Frost*: But when you said, as you said when we were talking about the Huston plan, you know, "If the President orders it, that makes it legal," as it were: Is the President in that sense—is there anything in the Constitution or the Bill of Rights, that suggests the President is that far of a sovereign, that far above the law?
>
> *Nixon*: No, there isn't. There's nothing specific that the Constitution contemplates in that respect. I haven't read every word, every jot and every tittle, but I do know this: that it has been, however, argued that as far as a President is concerned, that in wartime, a President does have certain extraordinary powers which would make acts that would otherwise be unlawful, lawful if undertaken for the purpose of preserving the nation and the Constitution, which is essential for the rights we're all talking about.

This notion of Presidential prerogatives permits Nixon to think of the Watergate affair as a "pipsqueak thing" and the break-in on Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist as an appropriate response to an anti-war "punk." The reduction of Watergate's significance for the former President is indicated by the change of rhetoric. "A deplorable incident" in 1973 becomes "a pipsqueak thing" in 1977. More, it underscores Nixon's vision of the Democratic Party as "the other side," an instrument of betrayal in Vietnam. From his early House and Senate races against Helen Gahagan Douglas and Jerry Voorhees, through the McCarthy era, and into his Vice Presidency as Eisenhower's hard line to the soft front, the "other side" for Nixon had always been the Democratic Party. His pathology, the "paranoia" that Nixon alludes to, was real. But he cleverly disguised even this by making it a matter of loving and hating "people," when in fact the paranoia was essentially ideological in character, an inability to distinguish between opposition and treason—or better, a compulson to treat them as the same entity. The Egil "Bud" Krogh "philosophy"—"those who are against us we will destroy, and those who are not for us we'll destroy"—was phrased precisely to support Nixon's belief system, which drew no line between Communists and Democrats, traitors and opponents.

By the time the public response to the tapes was felt

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by the Nixon inner circle, it was much too late to erase them. Certainly, the Presidential attorneys fully appreciated how risky their release would be, and exhausted every available legal means to prevent their publication. And it was simply not possible by mid-1974 or thereafter to urge sabotage, much less noncompliance, as a Presidential strategy. It is not even certain that Nixon would have adopted such a last-minute strategy.

In the interrogatory filed with the Church committee hearings of 1976, Nixon spoke of the "inherently governmental activities, which, if undertaken by the sovereign in protection of the interests of the nation's security are lawful, but which if undertaken by private persons are

Don Hesse, St. Louis Globe-Democrat

not." This role of President as Sovereign was expanded upon in the Frost interview by Nixon as follows:

> *Frost*: So what, in a sense, you're saying is that there are certain situations, and the Huston plan or that part of it was one of them, where the President can decide that it's in the best interests of the nation or something, and do something illegal.
>
> *Nixon*: Well, when the President does it, that means that it is not illegal.
>
> *Frost*: By definition.
>
> *Nixon*: Exactly. Exactly. If the President, for example, approves something because of the national security, or in this case because of a threat to internal peace and order of significant magnitude, then the President's decision in that instance is one that enables those who carry it out, to carry it out without violating a law. Otherwise they're in an impossible position.

Thus, we are in the presence of a full-fledged ideological position on the nature of Presidential power. It was this belief that finally explains the mystery of the Watergate tapes, not the eighteen minutes of missing material but the thousands of minutes that were left intact. Moreover, we are not dealing with an idiosyncracy—a belief held eccentrically by Nixon and his White House band of Haldeman, Ehrlichman, Kleindienst, Mitchell and their own entourages—but with a considerable body of conservative Republican opinion.

The position of Nixon on the trans-legal prerogatives of the Presidency is by no means isolated. It represents the root thinking of dominant figures in the conservative wing of the GOP, with the possible exception of Barry Goldwater. The fact that former Sen. Sam Ervin was constitutionally correct in noting that there is "no law that says that the President is exempt from the duties which devolve on other citizens," has not prevented others from proclaiming the reality of this exemption. Ronald Reagan, addressing the New Jersey Bankers' Association one day after the third Frost-Nixon interview, defended the view that a President may order nearly any action, including some illegal activities, when national security is involved:

> When the Commander in Chief of a nation finds it necessary to order employees of the government or agencies of the government to do things that would technically break the law, he has to be able to declare it legal in order for them to do that.

It may well be that the most important single element in the victory of Carter and the Democrats at the polls last November was the explicit repudiation of any notion of Presidential or Executive prerogatives or perquisites beyond those explicitly stated in the law. This may yield other forms of constitutional crisis; for example, if there is need for immediate Executive response to an international crisis without awaiting the direct Congressional inputs stipulated by the law. But for now, the Nixon era, and the two-year freezing of fundamental political discourse under Gerald Ford's interregnum, has come to an end. The issues, as posed by the Carter administration on one side, and Nixon and Reagan on the other, can be seen for what they are: a basic dispute on the limits of federal government and Executive authority. In the light of the Frost-Nixon interviews, the judgment by Arthur Schlesinger Jr. in *The Imperial Presidency* must be seen as vindicated:

> Nixon's Presidency was not an aberration but a culmination. It carried to reckless extremes a compulsion toward Presidential power rising out of deep-running changes in the foundations of society. In a time of the acceleration of history and the decay of traditional institutions and values, a strong Presidency was both a greater necessity than ever before and a greater risk —necessary to hold a spinning and distracted society together, necessary to make the separation of powers work.

Whether America can ever return to a fully constitutional Presidency, rejecting the notion of an imperial Presidency, is in some measure to be determined by the adequacy of the Constitution to meet the problem of foreign policy. In the past, when the center of political gravity was

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domestic, no one doubted that the Constitution was efficient; but in a world that does not play by the rules laid down by the Founding Fathers of the United States, the ability to use this 200-year-old instrument to ward off and overcome challenges becomes problematic. It was the shame and disgrace of the Nixon administration that it engaged in blatant transgressions of the law for petty partisan ends, using foreign affairs to rationalize violations of legal norms.

If it is conjectural that Nixon could have held power until January 20, 1977, it is equally conjectural that the consequent primary struggles in both the Republican and Democratic Parties would have gone as they did, since governmental ethics was very much a campaign issue. But what is no longer in conjecture is that the reason the tapes were retained and released had less to do with Presidential strategy than with the Commander in Chief's view of himself and his powers. The moral of this not-so-ancient history is also clear: those whom the gods would destroy they first give a missionary ideology. □

WILMINGTON 10

THE TRIAL THEY NEVER HAD

MARK PINSKY

In the spring of 1971, the Rev. Ben Chavis, eight teenaged blacks and a white VISTA volunteer were indicted on charges of conspiracy and of firebombing a white-owned grocery store. . . . Local officials acknowledged that they could not expect a fair trial in Wilmington, N.C. so the trial was moved to neighboring Pender County, which is predominantly black. The jury tentatively seated ten blacks and two whites. However, before testimony could begin the prosecutor announced that he was ill, and the judge declared a mistrial. At the second trial, where the jury drawn included ten whites and two blacks, the prosecutor remained healthy. . . .

The prosecution's case was based largely on evidence given by a young black who confessed to taking part in the February rioting. Chavis recalled the witness as one of the more unstable people inside the church, and said that he may in fact have disarmed him at one point. After confessing to the police, the young man was sent to the state mental hospital, where he remained until he pleaded guilty to all charges and agreed to testify against the Wilmington 10. . . .

Addressing the jury after the evidence had been completed, the New Hanover County prosecutor (since appointed Assistant U.S. Attorney) said that the defendants were "dangerous animals who should be put away for the rest of their lives." The jury evidently agreed; in less than an hour it found all ten guilty. The judge then sentenced them to prison terms ranging from ten years for the VISTA worker to thirty-four years for Chavis.

—From "North Carolina Blots Its Record" by Mark Pinsky, *The Nation*, October 11, 1975

Much of the long-awaited "post-conviction hearing" of the Wilmington 10 lacked drama, was almost anti-climactic: the prosecution, represented by the North Carolina Attorney General's office, was halfhearted, desultory and perfunctory; the defense, put on by the civil rights firm which originally defended the group at their 1972 trial, was low key and traditional; Judge George M. Fountain was gentle, permissive, extremely forbearing and quick to deny the petitioners (nine of the ten are in prison) a new trial.

The tiny town of Burgaw, N.C., which lent its county courthouse on the square to the hearings, was largely oblivious to the proceedings. "It's Wilmington's problem, not ours," observed one county commissioner. Even the political movement surrounding the hearing was muted, dominated by the United Church of Christ, of which defendant and Wilmington 10 leader, the Rev. Ben Chavis, is a member, by other religious organizations and by the National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression, which Chavis helped found. For that reason, Angela Davis, a co-founder of the alliance, was in the courtroom, along with an observer from Amnesty International and a television crew from East Germany, interested in the case as a possible U.S. violation of human rights under the Helsinki Accords. Inside the high-ceilinged courtroom the large number of spectators on hand at the beginning of the hearing fell away as the proceedings went on.

The drama came in the later stages of the defense testimony which, in effect, turned into the trial the Wilmington 10 never had. Ann Shepherd, the lone white woman in the group and the only one not jailed, sat behind the defense table for two days. The nine other defendants, including the Reverend Chavis, were scattered around the state in various prison camps where they are serving long prison sentences, all denied bail to attend the hearing. During the week, several witnesses provided ironclad alibis for the younger members of the 10, but the most important witnesses for the defense were Eugene and Donna Templeton, a white couple now living in New Jersey, who were prevented by intimidation from testifying at the original trial, and this forced the defense to rest without calling any witnesses.

Both Templetons testified, as they said they would have in 1972 (and as they did recently on CBS's *60 Minutes*), that Ben Chavis was with them in their Gregory Congregational Church parsonage when the nearby white-owned grocery store was burned. Recalling the horror and the terror of the nights of early February 1971, Donna Templeton, a nurse, told of turning her dining room into a makeshift hospital because for a time it was too dangerous to try to take anyone to the hospital, where she worked. "There were white men in pickup trucks riding through our neighborhood, firing," she told the court.

The Rev. Eugene Templeton told the presiding judge

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(there was no jury) that the Reverend Chavis and others armed themselves because "they did not want this to be like the 1898 situation," referring to the attack by white vigilantes on the coalition of black Republicans and white Populists which controlled the Wilmington City Council near the turn of the century. In the course of a week of rioting in 1898, conservative Democrats killed scores of blacks, throwing their bodies into the Cape Fear River, burning black newspapers, running legitimate state and federal officeholders out of town—all while federal troops and state militia observed without intervening, and newspapers around the state cheered the "white revolution."

"The issue," Mr. Templeton said softly, "was one that the black community was not going to be intimidated by the Klan, by threats, by conservative whites. . . . At the time I thought it was the appropriate response."

Mr. Templeton said that, subsequently, people from Camp Lejeune and Fort Bragg who were "more familiar with weapons and more disciplined" arrived to defend his Gregory Congregational Church, which was located on the site of a Normal School for freed slaves. As in 1898, the minister recalled, local and state officials were called on first to protect the black community from the armed night riders, but with no success. It was only then, Templeton said, that he allowed what the prosecutor charged were these "outsiders coming in, turning the church into a fortress."

A.J. Cole, one of the two assistant attorneys general presenting the state's case, then asked him, "Do you condone violence in this country?"

"No," replied the minister.

"Well, isn't that what you did?" Cole asked, his voice rising.

"Yes," answered Templeton with a sigh.

Asked by Mr. Cole if Mr. Chavis had not taken over a deteriorating and uncontrollable situation, Templeton disagreed, saying that throughout the turmoil "the only control being exercised was Ben's leadership."

What emerged, more than anything else in the course of the hearing, were the sleazy methods used routinely by local prosecutors in criminal cases. At the time of the racial unrest in 1971, Jay Stroud was a politically ambitious assistant district attorney who saw his chance and took it. He latched onto the case and onto three black teenagers who had been inside the besieged church and on the periphery of the civil rights movement that Chavis had been called to Wilmington to lead. These three were:

¶Jerome Mitchell, facing first-degree murder and armed robbery charges in an unrelated incident.

¶Eric Junious, an impoverished adolescent with a record of juvenile offenses.

¶Allen Hall, a mentally unstable young man initially charged with committing the specific acts of arson and assault charged against the Wilmington 10.

Using a string of deals, promises, small bribes and intimidation, Prosecutor Stroud was able to turn the three into informers and parlay their testimony into a classic betrayal of Chavis and the other members of the Wilmington 10. In the course of the post-conviction hearing, which provided a fascinating insight into the building of a prosecution case, Stroud's methods were also exposed; they included such exploits as manipulating the romantic entanglements of his chief informer (transporting his girlfriend across the state on the pretext of arranging a marriage), feigning illness himself when the informer had second thoughts, housing convicted felons at state expense in beach-front motels during the trial, allowing drugs to be provided to one of those so housed, and using a federal agent of the Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms division of the Treasury Department to instruct a witness in the preparation and use of firebombs in order to enhance his credibility on the witness stand.

But, although Stroud was able to secure convictions and long prison sentences, the prosecutor welched on the promises he made to the men. By now troubled, and thought by themselves to be outcasts and jinxed, all three have been in and out of prison, where all are now serving time. And so began the recantations and the slow unraveling of the case which provoked the interest of the media and the calling of the post-conviction hearing.

Stroud, who now works as assistant county prosecutor for another district attorney across the state (a man whose overzealousness in calling for the death penalty has prompted an unusual public rebuke from the North Carolina Supreme Court), demonstrated that he has not mended his ways since the original trial of the Wilmington 10.

On the witness stand at the post-conviction hearing he revealed that he had secretly taped telephone conversations that amounted to a leading cross-examination of Allen Hall. During these talks on several evenings during the proceedings, Hall recanted his recantation, something the voluble young man had been known to do several times in the past when placed under pressure. In the conversations, Hall revealed that a local reporter had phoned to warn him that his initial, highly publicized recantation might "mess up Jay's career." In the final taped conversation, when Stroud was obviously playing upon Hall's emotions, the prosecutor confessed that his driving thought toward the Wilmington 10 defendants as he sat through the hearing was—after five years—"my feeling that they're too dangerous to be released from prison."

Under defense cross-examination in the Burgaw courtroom, Stroud's unflappable demeanor began to crumble. Alternately stretching a rubber band between his hands and drying his palms on his knees, he admitted that his memory had failed him on two critical matters when he testified before the federal grand jury. He said that he had told the jury in Raleigh that he didn't recall ordering the transportation of Allen Hall's girlfriend across the state or that—contrary to what he told the jury in 1972 in his closing remarks—there was another serious, unrelated charge hanging over Jerome Mitchell's head when he testified for the prosecution. More than two dozen times in the course of the cross-examination Stroud answered, "I don't recall" or "I can't specifically recall" to questions.

"I don't recall what I recalled," he said at one point.

And the tape recordings? Was he being honest with Allen Hall? "I felt no compulsion to relate my personal feelings toward Allen Hall," Stroud replied, exasperated. His sympathy was calculated to "maintain the confidence

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Allen Hall had in me." Nevertheless, he said, "I do consider Allen Hall to be a friend."

Stroud's own luck since the 1972 conviction has been erratic and mostly bad. At present, he himself is the subject of a federal grand jury investigation in Raleigh, ordered by Atty. Gen. Griffin Bell and conducted by the Civil Rights division of the Justice Department, to determine whether or not his conduct of the Wilmington 10 prosecution violated the civil rights of the defendants.

Judge Fountain's surprisingly swift refusal to grant a new trial, while technically appealable, has the effect of moving the struggle to free the Wilmington 10 from the judicial to the political arena. Democratic Gov. James Hunt, a young progressive, may ultimately be prevailed upon to commute the sentences of the nine still in prison, a course of action recommended twice by the Raleigh *News & Observer*, an influential morning paper that in the past has shown little sympathy for the group. On the second occasion, the morning following Judge Fountain's decision, its lead editorial concluded that:

> With the passage of enough time to allow emotions to subside, these harsh sentences should be commuted to the time already served by the defendants.
>
> Governor Hunt properly has refused to be pressured into helping the defendants while their attorneys reargued their case on legal grounds. But once this is settled, if there is no change on appeal, he could wisely rescue this state's reputation by commuting the harsh sentences.

In the week that followed, similar editorials appeared in *The Charlotte Observer, The Greensboro Daily News* and *The Winston-Salem Journal.*

The primary obstacle to executive clemency is that the new Governor now has an ambitious program before the legislature and a referendum coming in 1978 to permit him and future North Carolina governors to succeed themselves. Although Governor Hunt is quite popular, having been elected in 1976 with a majority of 60 percent, he may be reluctant to spend any of his political capital on a cause involving justice and a matter of conscience that is unpopular with most of the electorate. Within the past month, for example, he announced his support of a new death penalty bill (the old one was declared unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court a year ago) and said that he would not automatically exercise executive clemency to prevent executions from taking place.

On May 25, Governor Hunt's legal adviser, noting the stream of mail protesting Judge Fountain's ruling, released a statement which said, "We would prefer not to involve the Governor's executive powers while a case is in the courts. That is Governor Hunt's policy." If the Governor were to intervene after the judicial process is exhausted, the spokesman said, it would be on an individual basis. "The Governor would not look at this as the Wilmington 10, but as separate cases, and he would decide each case on its own."

For his part, Chavis says that the Wilmington 10 would not accept a commutation. "We have not ever considered commutation, because we're innocent. The only thing we've ever considered is to ask the Governor for a pardon of innocence," he said from McCain Prison Camp near Fort Bragg. After following the post-conviction hearing in the press and by telephone from his attorneys, Chavis said, "I think Judge Fountain had his mind made up before the hearing." The ruling, he said, was "absolutely racist and absolutely political."

North Carolina, once known as a harbinger of the New South, must now accept responsibility for being the state which, in the space of six months, defeated ERA and reinstated the death penalty, the state with the highest per capita rate of incarcerated prisoners, the state which, having the lowest percentage of unionized workers and the lowest average industrialized hourly wage, allows the J.P. Stevens Company to trample the rights of textile workers —and the state which refuses to free the Wilmington 10. □

LETTERS *(Continued from page 738)*

Civil Liberties Union since the year one. Just so you know my own lifelong ethical activism.

The sooner you get away from stereotyping human beings . . . the sooner you will understand that left wingers and right wingers can get together on a single issue for a limited goal for the good of all the people. That's just what a number of us, across the ideological spectrum, did a few years ago here in Los Angeles; at that time we all worked together to defeat the fluoridation of the city water supply. . . . *David Seidman*

Freedom of Information Act

Washington, D.C.

Martin Michaelson's "Freedom of Information: Up Against the Stone Wall" [*The Nation*, May 21] implies that the Department of Defense is less than forthcoming in its dealings with people seeking records under the Freedom of Information Act. It is stated that the Defense Department denied 5,197 requests in 1975 and 6,973 in 1976. Those numbers were taken from the required annual reports to Congress which show how the department is doing in its implementation of the Freedom of Information Act.

Those annual reports also reveal that, of the reported 1975 denials, 3,717 represented instances in which a record did not exist, the record was not reasonably described, the requester failed to comply with published rules and procedures, the requests were transferred to other agencies, and requests were withdrawn. Similarly in 1976, there were 5,016 "unable to provide" instances included in those "denials."

Given some 44,000 requests in 1975 and 41,500 in 1976 —and excluding the "unable to provide" instances from the denials—the disclosure rates would be 97 percent and 95 percent, respectively. Not bad—but that's just a view from the other side of the fence. *Thomas B. Ross*
Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense

Bible lesson

Chicago, Ill.

President Carter, we were told as he finished his first 100 days in office, is still learning his job. Even more important than what he has yet to learn, however, may be what a self-assured man should not forget.

One lesson Mr. Carter should not forget was learned in his home-town church. He evidently did not rely there upon tough "confrontation" responses to his fellow members' callous position on race relations. He should remember such constructive patience as he deals both with Congress and with the Russians. *George Anastaplo*

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BOOKS & THE ARTS

Blaming the Victim

WE MUST MARCH MY DARLINGS: A Critical Decade. *By Diana Trilling. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. 315 pp. $10.*

RONALD RADOSH

Our cultural history continues to be packaged by decades. This season has already brought us Morris Dickstein's sympathetic treatment of the 1960s' culture in *Gates of Eden*; and now we have a very different assessment of that decade from Diana Trilling, whose political and cultural vision developed in the 1930s, framed by the Spanish Civil War on one hand, and the betrayal of the Socialist dream in the Moscow purge trials of the 1930s on the other.

Although Mrs. Trilling's volume is essentially a collection of previously published responses to the decade, with some significant additions and updating, she still manages to address herself to the right questions, and is often a good enough polemicist to make us attend to even her weakest arguments. But on her own terms—her claim that "I did my best to look beneath the appearance of things, especially the things which announce themselves as virtues"—she fails to convince.

On one level, Mrs. Trilling's work is about the relation between culture and politics. The opening selections focus on two figures from the 1960s—John F. Kennedy and Timothy Leary. The juxtaposition is as striking as its rationale is cheap. The Kennedy piece is a mawkish, uncritical paean to the former President, almost embarrassing in its naïveté. Mrs. Trilling adores Kennedy, since she sees him as a "President who satisfied the desire of intellectuals for a government approximate to their own vision." To Mrs. Trilling, there are no conservative intellectuals, radical intellectuals, or liberal intellectuals. There are simply intellectuals, a group evidently forming a class-in-themselves; "us." These people hold in trust the values of a culture, and they insure its continuity through history. John F. Kennedy is therefore praised as a President who "believes in history and in the continuity between past and future," enough so that even the skeptical young believed in him.

Timothy Leary, on the other hand, worked to destroy the young's belief in the social order. Leary was a foolish and peripheral figure in the 1960s, and although Mrs. Trilling's dissection of him is incisive, her indictment of a whole movement in the name of this one marginal individual is ignorant if it is not dishonest. She attacks with some reason the often spurious and phony radicalism of the counterculture, and she warns of the need "to resist the seduction of rebelliousness for its own youthful sake." But despite these points, Leary remains the all too narrow launching pad from which her attack on the 1960s takes off. To her credit, Mrs. Trilling is content to be an intellectual, a book person. But having no direct or extensive experience of the 1960s quite ironically makes her prey to clichés from the media: she contrasts her own generation's dedication to revolution that "had been social and political" with a ludicrous view of the 1960s "revolutionaries" who were content to take an acid trip and then believe they had caught a glimpse of the future—the same old media cartoon.

With much justification she asks, "How can any enlightened person of whatever age take this psychedelic leader with intellectual seriousness and assent in an ideology so barren of ideas?" Are his followers, she inquires, "the best, the brightest, of their generation"? But she does not detect the irony in her words. The best and brightest of her own generation had taken America down the path of both the imperial Presidency and the liberals' war in Vietnam. Yet her own political commentary contains only praise for official liberalism (or at best lukewarm criticism), always combined with sermons upon the sins of the Left. "I have joined no marches or demonstrations," she tells Robert Lowell. And the very title of her book, taken from a stanza of a Whitman poem, is meant ironically: she will not become involved in a "united front with anti-Americanism," by which she means that anyone who speaks against American atrocities in Vietnam speaks in the spirit of anti-Americanism. Proud of being a rationalist, as she calls herself, one wonders what sort of American atrocity it would take to shake her from this most irrational knee-jerk patriotism.

To Mrs. Trilling, the war was merely stupid and wrong, but loose talk about American imperialism was simply that, loose talk, mere rhetoric. The war was a mistake—its escalation an error, but, she clarifies, "not its inception." As Christopher Lasch points out, Vietnam was a war waged by the Kennedy liberalism she admires, and so one could not expect her views to be any more critical than they are: "The war is more than a general expression of American culture," Lasch writes; "it is also the particular expression of a particular class which has for too long played the dominant role in our affairs . . . it was a liberal war, the culmination of twenty years of cold war carried out under liberal auspices and reflecting the traditions of a ruling class supposedly enlightened, mature, and superior to the grosser strains in American life."

Mrs. Trilling speaks for those who carried out that war, and on behalf of the myth which sees the official repositories of our culture as more enlightened than they really are. At the same time she would have us believe that the Left is and was composed of the historically and culturally benighted. As usual a sliver of experience suffices to bolster this view: upon returning to Radcliffe in the spring of 1971, she makes much of finding that "the nonhistorians, many of them staunchly left wing in their politics . . . gave sign of almost total ignorance of the historical background and source of their beliefs." Virtually none of the students she asked could answer her questions about the Spanish Civil War—the turning point for her own generation. Mrs. Trilling may have a point, yet her own sense of history seems to have stopped with the discovery of the horrors of Stalinism. The following passage strikes me as so remarkable that it must be quoted in full:

> . . . the makers and recorders of the history of recent decades prefer not to recall that our "enlightened" acquiescence in Stalinism carried well into the White House, to the point . . . when the war ended, despite America's overwhelming military ascendancy, [Franklin D. Roosevelt] trusted Stalin's assurances at Yalta and yielded to the Soviet Union what should never have been countenanced: millions upon mil-

Ronald Radosh is a frequent contributor to The Nation. *His essay, the Anti-Communist Liberal Intellectuals and the 1950s, will appear next November in* Inquiry *magazine.*

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lions of Poles, Hungarians, Rumanians, Bulgarians, and ultimately Czechs and Germans too, were permitted to come under the domination of a brute alien force. . . . The Soviet empire was doubled in size . . . had our opinion-forming class not for so many years blindly played the Soviet Union's game Russia would not only not have achieved her present strength in Europe; she might not have been able to back North Vietnam as she did and there would have been no Vietnam War for us to become engaged in unwisely as we did.

Her historical ignorance here is no less embarrassing than that of the students she found at Radcliffe. She reduces the complexities of Yalta to the Republican right wing's canard about "Twenty Years of Treason" and buys other shopworn and long-discredited notions as well: does she really attribute the long Vietnamese nationalist movement's perseverance to the Soviet Union? Can she even acknowledge the crucial time when the United States made the decision to support French colonialism in Indochina? Or is the French colonial rule over Vietnam just another cliché of the Stalinist Left? She misreads the goals and policies of the wartime policy makers, greatly inflates the power and importance of the pro-Communist Left, and does not understand the history of Vietnam. If contemporary Radcliffe students were to obtain their standards on historical accuracy from Mrs. Trilling, one would expect to find them mouthing slogans in ignorance of facts.

Which brings us to the much noted Hellman/Trilling controversy. Mrs. Trilling was right about the nature of Stalinism, and Miss Hellman and others of her generation were wrong. But an understanding of Stalinism does not assure equal wisdom when it comes to understanding American repression. Indeed, Mrs. Trilling asserts that "liberal anti-communism was not, and still is not, the recommended path to professional success." One wishes she would direct this to the scores of entrenched liberal anti-Communists whose access to power and privilege has remained constant. It was not, after all, the "anti-anti-Communists" (non-Communist radicals) whom John F. Kennedy invited to dinner at the White House. After some rough going at the hands of blacks, students and other powerless groups in the late 1960s, Mrs. Trilling and her sort are more firmly in fashion than ever. These essays and others like them now fill many of our periodicals and are the bitter fruits of her generation's temporary discomfort at the hands of the "young barbarians."

For Mrs. Trilling Stalinism remains the enemy—a hydra-headed creature as much a threat in the New Left as it was in the old—even when contemporary experience tells us otherwise. In the updated version of her contribution to the 1967 *Commentary* symposium "Liberal Anti-Communism Revisited," Mrs. Trilling repeats what is by now a familiar litany: her generation saw no contradiction "in having been opposed to *both* communism and McCarthyism." What Mrs. Trilling actually stood for and apparently still does is what I'd call anti-Stalinist McCarthyism. The responsibility for McCarthyism is laid at the door of left-wing intellectuals who refused to realize the truth about Stalinism—a highly dubious and irresponsible reading of history, but one which nicely serves Mrs. Trilling's conviction that the accouterments of the McCarthy era witch hunt were not without merit. She describes HUAC as "a duly constituted Congressional committee" whose investigations did not reveal that "whoever it put under scrutiny was thereby certified to be innocent." Mrs. Trilling does not let us know—perhaps she would prefer to forget—that she supported the McCarran Committee's harassment of Owen Lattimore. She acknowledged at the time that he was neither a spy nor a Communist, simply an "independent" thinker whose ideas rationalized Soviet foreign policy. The danger, she then wrote, was not from McCarthy but from Left intellectuals who sought to rally the public around the issue of civil liberties.

By Mrs. Trilling's logic, to assume that McCarthy's victims were innocent was to become an apologist for Stalinism. Indeed, she once argued that since ideas "might lead to acts," they should be treated as such, making prosecution for dangerous ideas a permissible method of protection against Communist subversion. Down the line, Mrs. Trilling argued during the McCarthy era that McCarthy's victims brought their persecution on themselves: "Had Dr. Oppenheimer not once been sympathetic to communism, there would have been no Oppenheimer case."

SOMETHING TO SAVE US

As far as we know there's nothing more to say
About being so small for our size,
Nothing, therefore, about parentage.

There's nothing to say about maritime sadness:
Immodest signals from unreachable islands,
Earthrise on the moon.

There's little to say about innocence:
We'd land on distant planets
Like flies on the anvil;

We'd abandon our unborn,
Those intervals crouched around us wherever we are.
We'd wish the self even smaller,

Though the self is already smaller
Than anyone suspects.
All we wanted was a roundness we could count on.

There's nothing to say about the history of resurrection,
The chronicles of incapacity,
Nothing about falsehood or humor.

We are like relatives after an execution:
We've said we are like our own worn clothes
Hung to dry without us;

We've said we are like the windows of our own house
Falling away all at once;
We take root in the sound of our own breaking.

If there were something more to say,
How would that save us—
Violets, parasol, easy rain?

James Galvin

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A truly critical intellectual might have begun a reassessment by reviewing her own prior nonsense. That Mrs. Trilling seeks to repeat her old arguments with updated versions of them is indeed sad. The refrain she used for Oppenheimer is repeated in essay after essay. She reminds those on the Columbia faculty who condemned police lawlessness in the demonstrations of 1968 that "were it not for student lawlessness the law would never have been called to the campus." More of the same: Eugene McCarthy made a mistake in condemning Mayor Daley and the Chicago police after the 1968 Chicago police riot, since he "failed to name the provocateurs of violence [the New Left] who had deliberately invited retaliation." In all cases, the victims are responsible for their own victimization.

As a cultural commentator Diana Trilling is so polarized that her thinking lacks all resilience. She undermines her own best arguments. Certainly, New Left radicals incorrectly read the university as a microcosm of capitalist society. While leaving the social order intact, some of them moved to destroy the very base that served as their sanctuary. Mrs. Trilling realizes that the would-be revolutionary's claim that "all universities are representative of their societies" is fallacious. Yet her anger is reserved for the student rebels alone, not for the society whose anger they mimicked and whose irrationality they often aped. She complains that the "existential" revolution was "subverting the intelligence and self-interest of our better-educated" classes, and she is incensed at the "literary-intellectual fellow travelers of the revolutionary young," apostates from her own group of once liberal anti-Communists. Never does her anger extend to the ideology or policies of the Kennedy or Johnson administrations. Mrs. Trilling, like the cultural revolutionaries she despises, also rejects theory and politics—in favor of the status quo. To condemn the false counterculture while approving the culture of the society at large is basically to vitiate whatever valid criticisms she has of the self-proclaimed revolutionaries and to demonstrate the bankruptcy of her liberalism. Unlike critics such as Peter Clecak or Christopher Lasch who write, as Lasch says, "to construct an ad hoc defense of liberal culture . . . that would still be distinguishable from a defense of liberalism as a political ideology," Mrs. Trilling writes in defense of a bankrupt ideology as if it is indistinguishable from liberal culture. □

Coming Next Week

Noam Chomsky and Edward S. Herman, "Recent Perspectives on Cambodia"—a review essay analyzing the available evidence on Cambodia and the deliberate press distortions of it.

Pieces of Cuba

FOUR MEN: Living the Revolution/ An Oral History of Contemporary Cuba. *By Oscar Lewis, Ruth M. Lewis, and Susan M. Rigdon. University of Illinois Press. 538 pp. $15.*

JOSE YGLESIAS

During the last few years of his life, Oscar Lewis hoped to cap his studies of the poor in India, Mexico and Puerto Rico with one done in Cuba which would show that a genuine revolution could break the cycle of fatalism and despair that seemed endemic to the peasants and slum dwellers of his published work. In 1968, before he left for Havana to explore with Cuban leaders the possibility of doing research there, he already had some evidence that significant change of this sort had taken place in Cuba. As he explained in the introduction to *La Vida,* he had done research in a rural community near Havana in 1946, and had returned fifteen years later, some two years after the revolution, and briefly seen some of the people he had earlier studied. He had been struck by their optimism and their eager response to the revolutionary government's appeals to participate in the creation of a new Cuba. Lewis did not set out in 1968 to beg the question of his proposed project (there can be no doubt about the honesty with which he dealt with the materials of his research) but his undertaking such work in Cuba at the time did require sustained belief, as yet unsubstantiated by facts, in his humanistic expectations, for the obstacles that stood in the way of the project would have discouraged a disinterested or uncommitted social scientist.

The account of how he obtained carte blanche from Fidel Castro, set up his large staff in Havana, and went to work investigating various sectors of Cuban society, appears in the foreword of this new book, *Four Men,* the first of three projected volumes based on that research. It is written by his widow and close collaborator, Ruth M. Lewis. She tells for the first time how the project was abruptly halted by the Cuban authorities halfway through the three years that Lewis expected to work there. After so auspicious a beginning, this denouement was a terrible blow to Lewis, and may have contributed to his death six months after he was expelled from Cuba and prohibited by the security police from taking many papers for which he had no duplicates in the States. He mourned about this. He said to me, "It promised to be the best work I would have done," and added, ruefully, that it would have shown the Cuban Revolution in a most favorable light.

Lewis's editors and friends never published any version of this incident. They kept quiet out of deference, first, to Lewis himself, who until the last was negotiating for the return of his papers, and later to Mrs. Lewis. It is not clear from her foreword whether any of the confiscated papers were ever returned by the Cubans. Mrs. Lewis tells the story with a restraint that verges on the laconic. A pity. She is a modest woman and may not have wanted to exchange the discipline of anthropology for that of history; yet she has given the projected series, put together by her and Susan M. Rigdon, the overall title of *Living the Revolution* and subtitled it *An Oral History of Contemporary Cuba.* She thus invites our judgment about her historical sense.

Lewis and his wife and staff were in Cuba at what was perhaps the most interesting juncture in the Cuban Revolution. In 1968, when Lewis obtained the enthusiastic support of Castro, and other leaders identified with what one might call the libertarian thrust of the revolution, Cuba was still at the height of its heresy from Soviet orthodoxy. One can only telescope this stance here, but Cuba had opted for ideological incentives as against material ones for developing the economy, armed struggle in Latin America as opposed to peaceful transition to socialism, and freedom in the arts as opposed to prescribed themes and styles. Cuba was also experimenting at factory and town levels with genuinely democratic methods for manning the Communist Party and mass organizations. The Cubans had dared to put on public trial a pre-revolu-

Jose Yglesias is the author of In the Fist of the Revolution: Life in a Cuban Country Town *(Pantheon). His book* The Franco Years, *a study of the period following the Civil War, will appear in October.*

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Three Poems by W.S. Merwin

TIDAL LAGOON

From the edge of the bare reef in the afternoon
children who can't swim fling themselves forward calling
and disappear for a moment in the long mirror
that contains the reflections of the mountains

THE RED HOUSE

Room after room without a voice no one to say
only another century could afford so much space
spring sunlight through locked shutters reveals the old patchworks
adrift on the old beds in the dry air
and in the white fireplaces already it is summer

but there is only one age in all the rooms and mirrors
and it is beginning it has come to begin
the sound of a bus arrives outside and what looks like a closet door
in an upstairs bedroom opens onto green woods
full of the thin leaves of May and a shimmering meadow
and deep in grass beyond a stream and a waterfall
the rusted windowless bus to the amber fields

LINE OF TREES

Along the west of the woods there is a row of tall pines
the man who planted them came from an island
thousands of miles to the south and now with his wife
for a long time a nurse but lately not right in the head
who came from an island thousands of miles from his
he lives down the road since their small house in the woods
burned beyond repair but he still comes by
every so often to ignore the mailbox
rusted sedan full of vines brown fruit in the grassy ruts
when he has gone a pheasant barks from hiding
bird of a far continent and whenever the boughs
part suddenly to reveal the yellow house wall with its window
what they show is a mirror full of western light

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tionary leader of the old Communist Party for having urged the Czech and Soviet Embassies to bring pressure on Castro to conform to the Soviet line. In other words, Castro in 1968 had no thought of abandoning Che Guevara's teachings.

All this had started to change in 1969, when Lewis was installed in Havana, and by mid-1970, when he was ousted, the failure of the Guevarist line was an unavoidable issue. Mrs. Lewis attributes the hardening that took place to the Cubans' inability to reach the 10-million-ton sugar harvest, and their own ouster to their having interviewed a disaffected Cuban with family connections to a leading official. (My own understanding of the latter is different: the interviewed man's wife was having an affair with one of the original twelve rebels who had begun the fighting in the Sierra Maestra, which is as close as you can come to sainthood in revolutionary Cuba.) These two events were, of course, catalysts, but the larger reasons were more pressing. Mrs. Lewis never talks about the presence of the Soviet Union nor of the conflicts within the leadership of the revolution. She is, thus, seemingly unaware of the fact that Lewis's expulsion from Cuba signified that the Cuban leadership was ending its ideological quarrels with the Soviet Union and ready to do things its way. In a few months, with the jailing of the poet Heberto Padilla, and the threats against other Cuban intellectuals, the transition period that the Lewises experienced was ended.

I go over these old matters (summarily, I confess) primarily to point out that what happened to the Lewis expedition to Cuba yields, on the whole, more about contemporary Cuban history than the lives of the four men which make up this first volume. It is also, alas, more interesting. But I think too that Mrs. Lewis's imperfect historical sense leads her to hang these portraits somewhat askew. Since the period during which these men were talking to the Lewises and their collaborators is not clearly outlined, these particular Cubans' beliefs and inherited prejudices can seem to the reader to be inherent traits. Just as their confused apprehension of revolutionary social values, often traceable to the wavering ideological compromises of the leadership, can also appear to be simple stupidity.

True, Susan Rigdon and Mrs. Lewis offer these portraits with apologies. They had planned more interviews, and Oscar Lewis was no longer there to organize them. They have also helpfully explained historical and contemporary references in their footnotes, but these are not always thoroughgoing enough, perhaps because of insufficient knowledge. The monologues of the principals are interrupted with short ones by persons close to them, thus correcting self-serving accounts of important incidents in their lives. In her introduction, Susan Rigdon also summarizes her and the staff's interpretations of the four men, describes their appearances, and warns the reader about practical motives that are not reflected in their talk. She also tells us briefly how the research was done, the interviews conducted, and the material collated. The staff followed in the footsteps of their master and had been scrupulous indeed. Yet they seem to have failed to be coherent or interesting, though Mrs. Lewis asserts that "we believe the life stories presented here, whatever their other failings, are as honest and revealing as those we have recorded elsewhere."

The subjects of the book are in the Oscar Lewis tradition: the poorest of the poor, three of them from a notorious shantytown in Havana, one from a depressed area of Oriente. But if the poor of Mexico and Puerto Rico seemed to live outside history, so that public events in their countries seldom intruded on their monologues, the opposite obtains in Cuba. The revolution pokes into their daily lives and their most intimate thoughts: it tears down their shantytown, provides them with jobs, and

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forces them to confront their sexism, racial prejudices, and their attitudes toward collective work and national aspirations. The stories of their lives call for a single, informed, self-assured, organizing intelligence, obtruding at every turn of their stories, for as Mrs. Lewis's footnotes and subtitle would indicate, this study threatens at every moment to leap the fences that anthropology sets up.

The Oscar Lewis method of patching together myriad interviews and answers to questionnaires into wonderfully smooth and moving monologues will not work in this instance. I say this without in any way aligning myself with those academicians who snubbed his methods and his ultimate product, probably out of envy of his enormous audience. (Lewis had the ability to convert his readers' prurient interest into compassion.) Indeed, it is the academic discipline involved, which I glean from the foreword, introduction, and acknowledgments, that builds in the failure of the book. What can result from a work that, besides Lewis, his wife, and Susan Rigdon, engaged six interviewers, three translators, three organizers of the material, and seven editors? A camel, of course. It makes one wonder how Tolstoy managed on his own with *War and Peace*. Or to be fairer, how Claude Lévi-Strauss alone brought off *Tristes Tropiques*.

Not that there is not valuable material in these stories or moments that do not strike one as real and significant. But they will be useful mainly to specialists: they are still raw material, like an unassembled piece of electrical equipment supplied without an instruction booklet. For example, the longest portrait in the book is of an elderly man who talks most often about the political events in his lifetime, to show how he had always aligned himself with the most progressive elements in Cuban life. Obviously, the editors consider him the most "positive" character in the book, and although Susan Rigdon says in the introduction that he tended to talk pompously, she does not suspect that he is something of a four-flusher. He does not give a single convincing detail of his activism and, indeed, only a reader who knows the twists and turns of Cuban politics since the early 1930s can interpret him correctly. To explain: the old man boasts of the good work he did in the 1958 elections, and the editors apparently do not know that participation in that fraudulent election is held to be so grievous an error by the Cuban revolutionaries that simply to have voted then disqualifies Cubans for membership in the Communist Party.

Still, the book could have been successful in other ways. It could have sustained interest by letting the reader hear these men, for the street language of the Havanan is wonderfully lively and allusive. But the translation is inept and wooden, and neither literal nor transformed into an American equivalent. (The translators' notion of making the subjects sound like regular fellows is to make them use "like" for the con-

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DROUGHT

All summer the sun
has blazed; for three months
the sky has stood still

turning the green land
first gold (the harvest
waving impatient)

now all the colours
of autumn, too soon
to be lovely:
streams
have become green snakes
choking all that grew
to feed their slow skin.

Storms flicker and boom
through our nights but change
nothing:
the fence post
we tried to sink struck
dust then rock and snapped
beneath our blows.
Men
to appease gods once
butchered their children:
without seed or blood

we are fixed in our
parched millennium
by our own bright eye.

Keith Bosley

junction "as," a mistake impossible to make in Spanish.) When I read Rigdon blandly stating, "There are many responses to poverty, depending not only upon personality but on how and where poverty is experienced," I was reminded of Pitirim Sorokin's impatience with his sociologist colleagues' involuted way of saying nothing.

But the worst failure of the book is as narrative. Lewis's monologues in the past suffered from the difficulty of maintaining the illusion that the subjects were, in actuality, talking to you at the exhaustive length presented. But he had a sense of narrative his heirs have not. A man's life—in fiction or any other discipline—may be directionless but the narrative cannot be so without boring the reader. The materials of these lives are not that extraordinary and the telling falls far short of the beguiling lucidity, to be unfair, of Flaubert's *A Simple Heart*. One gets the itch to reshape them as one reads.

I suppose there is one objective the editors have undertaken that the book clearly achieves—that the Cubans whom most Americans have lately seen as their enemies are not of a piece. They have paid the price of our enmity and their leaders' mistakes and stuck to their revolutionary road; but they are suffering, amiable people whose conflicts should be familiar to us and whose well-being should sympathetically concern us. For the book to achieve only this seems little to me, but it does speak to our ignorance about Cuba. If only to learn this, we deserve to be put through this book. □

The Poetry of Mere Prose

THE BOOK OF THE BODY. *By Frank Bidart. Farrar, Straus & Giroux. 44 pp. $7.95.*

WITH IGNORANCE. *By C. K. Williams. Houghton Mifflin. 37 pp. $7.95.*

JAMES ATLAS

Ezra Pound said that poetry should be at least as well-written as prose, not that it should be written as if it *were* prose; but now that so much American poetry is innocent of rhyme or prosody, the distinction between prose and verse has all but vanished. Randall Jarrell and Robert Lowell (in his recent sonnets) wrote their poems with a sense of the novelistic, the narrative art of prose, but even so their poetry is governed by conventional forms. The remote, attenuated poetry of impressions perfected by W.S. Merwin, Mark Strand and their imitators has no form at all; only its lyric voice identifies it as poetry. And there are now poets writing who ignore even that requirement: Frank Bidart and C.K. Williams have moved in their new books toward a poetry that depends on sheer force of utterance to distinguish it from prose.

"Don't turn into the lies/ of mere, neat poetry," Bidart implored his father in *Golden State*, a series of autobiographical poems published four years ago. Perhaps his greatest accomplishment has been to violate those "lies"—of decorum, grace, reticence—without sacrificing his art. The sprawl and apparent randomness of Bidart's prosody belie an exacting sense of composition that has nothing to do with "free verse"; every word, line and stanza is justified by Bidart's will to reproduce the character of speech, its cadences and hesitations. In "The Arc," he notes how Paris

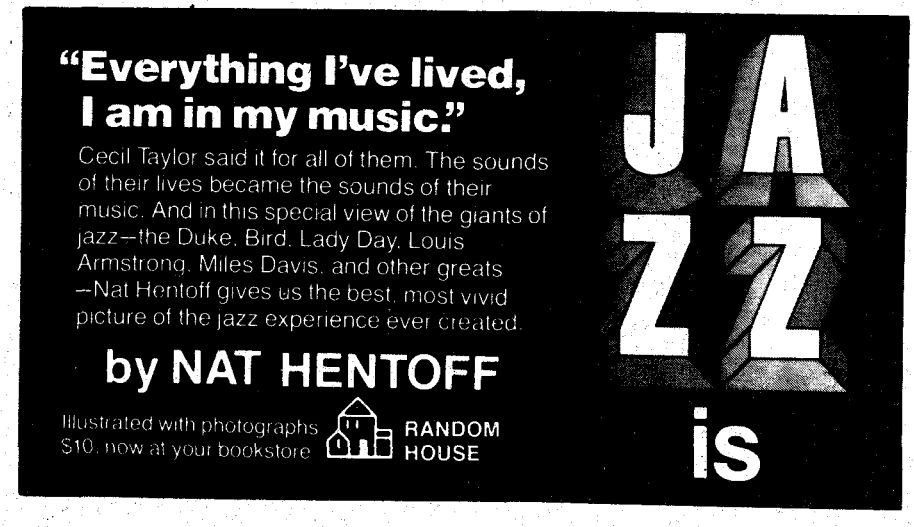
is still the city of Louis XVI and Robespierre, how blood, amputation, and rubble

give her dimension, resonance, and grace.

And in his poetry, the same balance operates; the disastrous past, with its grim power and obsessions, its "poverty of history, of awareness of/ the ways men have found to live," appears restored.

The California poems in Bidart's first book provide a striking image of that fascinating, desolate landscape, better even than Joan Didion's essays because less self-consciously apocalyptic. But they depend on the same deliberate accretion of detail one expects from prose; there are few striking lines in Bidart's poetry. It owes its effect to the cumulative intensity of the story he relates, and its "poetry" derives from the stark *montage* of words clustered on the page. "It was in Bishop, the room was done/ in California plush," he be-

James Atlas is the author of a biography of Delmore Schwartz, to be published in October.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gins his narrative:

> *we had gone into the coffee shop, were told*
> *you could only get a steak in the bar: I hesitated,*
> *not wanting to be an occasion of temptation for my father*
>
> *but he wanted to, so we entered*
>
> *a dark room, with amber water glasses, walnut*
> *tables, captain's chairs,*
> *plastic doilies, papier-mache bas-relief wall ballerinas,*
> *German memorial plates "bought on a trip to Europe,"*
> *Puritan crosshatch green-yellow wallpaper,*
> *frilly shades, cowhide*
> *booths—*

Bidart's is a poetry of emphasis, of pauses and insistent repetitions. It could not be written as prose because it demands the concentrated economies of the line and stanza to give it urgency. The portrait of his father acquires its vividness from compression and brusque reportage:

> *I look at my father:*
> *as he drinks his way into garrulous, shaky*
> *defensiveness, the debris of the past*
> *is just debris—; whatever I reason, it is a desolation*
> *to watch. . .*

And Bidart's ear for his parents' speech is perfect. The very intonations of his mother's voice, as she recalls the past and justifies her marriage, serve to illustrate her girlish naïveté:

> *"He introduced me to a fast, drinking crowd; my God,*
> *we smoked—! And I wore lipstick: Olive and I promised each other*
> *we would never do that."*

His father's letter to Bidart in Paris is a masterpiece of pathos: "I don't think I'll ever get the chance to go, so if you run into a extra special gal between 28 & 35 send her over here to me as all I know over here don't amount to mutch."

Every poetic renovation since Wordsworth has made a claim for the importance of the demotic, but few American poets have really tried to write American speech, and when they have, the result has been more or less disastrous. Pound thought all Americans talked like ignorant farmers; Eliot could never manage to capture the crudities of Sweeney's speech, which he invariably exaggerated; and the low-life soliloquy at the beginning of *The Waste Land* in its earliest version is more artificial still. Frank O'Hara's "I do this, I do that" poems are undeniably colloquial—to the point of banality. The virtue of Bidart's poetry is that it records what is interesting, characteristic, self-revelatory about the way his parents talk, and uses that expressiveness to dramatize their lives. His gift for illustrating failure and emptiness, inarticulate feelings and unspoken regret by means of quotation is infallible.

Bidart's dramatic monologues are disconcerting, to put it mildly. "Herbert White," the first poem in *Golden State,* is spoken by a murderer of young girls who likes to "jack off" over their bodies, and *The Book of the Body* opens with the meditations of an amputee; instructions about how to bandage his stump introduce the poem. "Ellen West" is based on a case history by Ludwig Binswanger of an anorexic woman who loathes her body and ends a suicide. But there is far more to these lurid histories than a desire to shock; the myth of Philoctetes, which Edmund Wilson made a parable of the artist's estrangement from society in *The Wound and the Bow,* is a tacit parable for Bidart as well. Philoctetes's offensive, suppurating wound prevents him from using his great bow, just as Bidart's characters—not gifted precisely, but with sufficient human attributes to warrant their being salvaged—are crippled by their psychic wounds.

> *—Hell came when I saw*
> *MYSELF . . .*
> *and couldn't stand*
> *what I see . . .*

What enables Bidart to fathom and interpret others' warped lives with such apparent ease is the recognition that his own damaged experience requires

> *An adult's forgiveness of his parents born out of increasing age and empathy*
>
> *which really forgives nothing,—*
> *but is loathing, rage, revenge,*
>
> *yet forgiveness as well—;*

Perhaps this is why his most impressive poems are autobiographical. The dramatic monologues, convincing as they are, often sound like the poet himself; their traumas, rehearsals of betrayal, even the inflections of their voices recall the more intimate confessions that resonate through the poems about Bidart's own life. In *The Book of the Body,* he returns to the familiar themes

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of mother and father—the "family romance" in its most destructive form—and his precarious journey toward a tolerant self-estimate. "Elegy" begins with the death of his mother's dog (a scene of pure bathos, but incredibly moving all the same), then takes up her own death from cancer, concluding with a brilliant villanelle about the grotesque menace of a past that resists resolution and yet insists on its primacy:

Now no act of Mind,—or Will,—can reveal
the secret to un-say *all we once said. . .*
I feel too much. I can't stand what I feel.

"Happy Birthday" and the title poem offer minor variations on poems in *Golden State*: "Self-Portrait, 1969," where, staring at himself in a mirror, he wonders, "What *reaches* him except disaster?" and "To my Father," "whose name was not in my language." But of course it is, and the danger is that Bidart will find himself pronouncing that name, in the form of poems that bind him ever closer to their source, until he has exhausted the subject. As for the dramatic monologues, they too threaten to become repetitive, and one can only hope that ideas other than "disaster" will eventually reach his imagination. If they do, Bidart promises to become one of the significant poets of our time.

The poetry of C.K. Williams is even more prosaic than Bidart's, and he relies on a diffuse, unruly rhetoric that has none of Bidart's rhythmic order. His first two books, *Lies* and *I Am the Bitter Name*, were vitiated by a shrill vehemence and sentimentality. The absence of capitals or punctuation made the poems blur and sprawl. Their dominant note was of agony; they were welts of inchoate feeling. His new book, *With Ignorance*, is likewise flawed, but his poetry has come to possess an eerie incantatory power that salvages it from confession. Like Bidart, Williams is writing parables, plain tales about men and women in extreme situations: a laborer at home with his family, and the inarticulate tensions that tear him apart; a friend who went mad; a Vietnam veteran in a bar, tormented by the murders he committed, both in the war and as a small-time mobster later on; and in other poems, "my wife, my child . . . my home, my work, my sorrow." And like Bidart, he borrows the cadences of ordinary speech, vigorous and utterly without refinement, depending on a litany of charged rhetoric to transform prose into poetry.

Some of his poems *are* prose:

The men working on the building going up here have got these great,
little motorized wheelbarrows that're supposed to be for lugging
bricks and mortar
but that they seem to spend most of their time barrel-assing
up the street in,
racing each other or trying to con the local secretaries into
taking rides in the bucket.

The lines are so long that the book had to be published in a wide-page format, like an art catalogue. The limitations of such a style are self-evident; Williams is writing in haphazard strokes, and with such apparent haste—or perhaps deliberate casualness—that he even disposes of grammar on occasion (and if poets no longer feel obliged to write correct English, who does?). Eager to blurt out his feelings, he rushes from one sad incident to another, pouring forth woe in a hectic, rude, indignant voice; what comes to mind is the Italian gesture of slapping one's forehead with an open palm.

Still, in other poems his lines are Biblical in their sonority, and resonate with a dire prophecy reminiscent of "Howl":

If this were the last morning of the world, if time had finally moved inside us and erupted
and we were Agamemnon again, Helen again, back on that faint, beginning planet
where even the daily survivals were giants, filled with light, I think I'd still be here,
afraid or not afraid, silently howling the names of death over the grass and asphalt.

Williams achieves a memorable intensity in the title poem, where the longing to survive, to transcend the dross of experience and to discover its essence culminates in a stunning evocation of "history, power, grief and remorse"—sensations that converge on the speaker and threaten to annihilate his imaginative life, the only life that promises to survive.

In the poems of both Williams and Bidart, the pressure of history is so overwhelming that only direct utterance can accommodate its lessons. For Bidart,

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this pressure is familial, autobiographical, the legacy of Freud; for Williams, it is the flux and chaos of contemporary America, which menaces the private world we fashion for ourselves. But what their poems have in common—apart from a perilous resemblance to prose—is a conviction that even the most rudimentary language, the most elemental speech, can be made into art. □

FILMS

ROBERT HATCH

Ettore Scola's *We All Loved Each Other So Much* is a film more rewarding to see than to review. There is almost nothing to be said against it, but not a great deal more to be said about it. The title looks awful in print, but goes better if spoken with an edge of irony, which is the intention.

We All Loved is constructed on a formula not unknown here, but exploited more frequently in European movies, perhaps because the situation it describes occurs there more often than here—the persistence of youthful friendship into middle age. In this case the relationship is among three men and a woman over the span from World War II to the present. The prevailing note is a high-spirited acceptance of life, warts and all—a tone maintained effortlessly by Nino Manfredi and Stefano Satta Flores, two actors who are conspicuously ebullient even among the extroverts of the Italian screen. A second, more somber theme, that of corruption in the service of power, is developed by Vittorio Gassman, who is now a little beyond playing the dashing breaker of hearts called for in the 1940s scenes, but who looks convincingly the scoundrel financier and domestic sadist of the more contemporary passages.

Scola gives his entertainment substance by acknowledging the less than satisfactory social and political development of postwar Italy; his people are scarred by it and fight back with sharpened wit and the resources of their own vitality. They don't prevail; neither do they quite succumb. But since the goal is entertainment, with an emphasis on high jinks and the absurdity of romantics asserting their individuality in a time of aggressive materialism (the aging tycoon, played by Aldo Fabrizi, expresses his individuality to somewhat greater effect), the sorrows, indeed the tragedies, implicit in the script are more stated than explored, and the picture rests on a somewhat ambiguous base. Life is a mixture of light and shadow—no aphorism more trite—but in fiction an astonishingly steady hand and encompassing sympathy are needed to keep the two modes in creative harmony. When that is lacking, the merriment can suddenly seem heartless and an audience may be abashed by its own laughter. *We All Loved* does not offend seriously in this respect; just enough to raise the point.

It offends more noticeably, perhaps, in its immoderately masculine point of view. Women—and particularly Luciana (Stefania Sandrelli), the woman whose life is entwined with those of the three comrades—are treated with respect, Luciana is seen to have power over the men. But it is the passive power of allure; that of a flower over a bee. The story is about what the men do; it is assumed that the woman will behave accordingly, and she does. It would be foolish to make much of this, but it is true that a story about the lives and loves of three old buddies—particularly when the loves are all for one woman—does not fit very conveniently into current reconsiderations about the relations between the sexes.

Finally, Scola's own apparent friendship with his great contemporaries has let him take advantage of the "film-about-film" theme now in fashion among directors. Both the late Vittorio De Sica and Fellini appear in his picture. The former's *Bicycle Thief* is integral to its plot and a famous scene from the latter's *La Dolce Vita* is restaged in rehearsal, with both Fellini and Marcello Mastroianni appearing "off camera" on camera. And Giovanna Ralli, who plays Gassman's desperate wife, comes fatally to identify herself with Antonioni's disconnected heroines. It is smart exploitation of a current conceit which manages not to become arch. □

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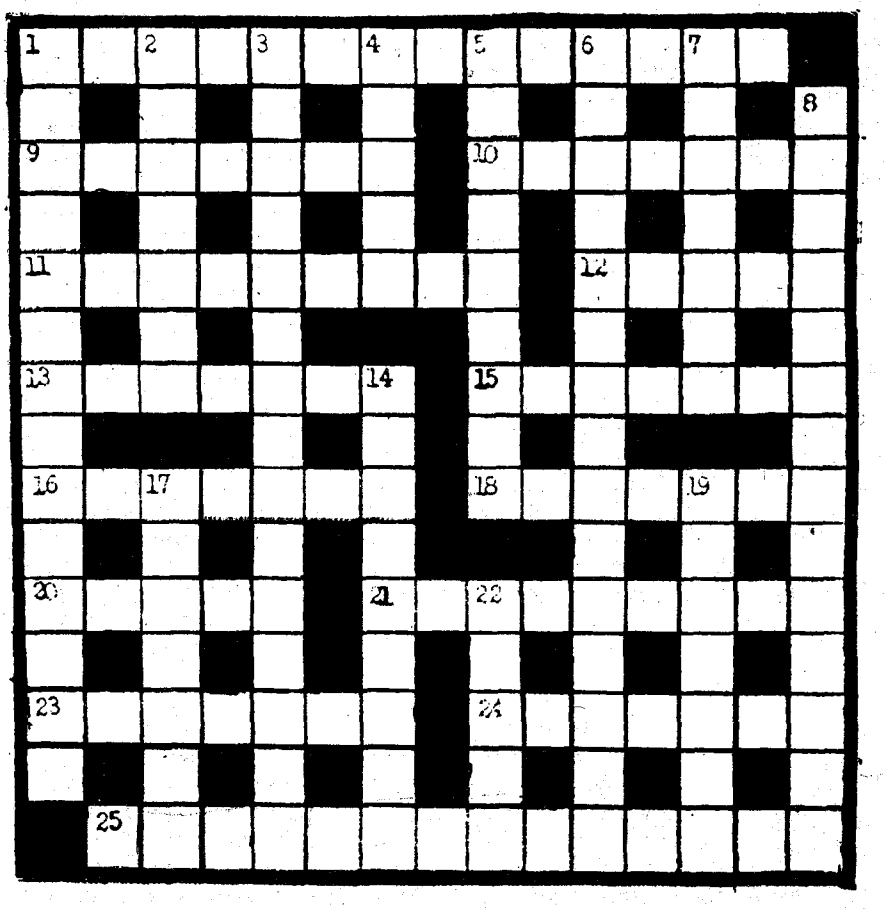

ACROSS

1 The possible list of church parties used to be limited to several hundred. (It really doesn't measure your ability to get along.) (6,8)
9 Not really a confined hen—more likely to be a fine craftsman. (7)
10 Not those born around the first of February—they may have big tanks. (7)
11 One gets over things like this, but it makes us run most awkwardly. (9)
12 As the speed changes? (5)
13 Checked things over, but of course one got no credit if one did. (7)
15 The path of flight. (3,4)
16 Pibrochs might also be decorative. (7)
18 Are pots woven from such grass? (7)
20 Weird sisters coming from one direction or two? (5)
21 A good working description. (9)
23 Completely occupy. (7)
24 Certainly not the type that can't say no. (7)
25 For example, dog biscuits? (Marx followers probably know it.) (6,8)

DOWN

1 Chips, so-called. (In the main, you might expect one to fix things up.) (5,9)
2 What makes metal icy around it, and blue or green, for example. (7)
3 Implying when the weather is rough, one doesn't worry about the wine? (3,4,2,1,5)
4 Certain sports ties are not necessarily a non-original print. (5)
5 Goblets, etc., or possibly large saws. (9)
6 Somewhat like the well-known musical, with several long runs in the west. (8,7)
7 The largest land mass area is U-turned. (7)
8 Possibly great apes die of what should be served as a delicacy. (4,2,4,4)
14 What reading the riot act is supposed to achieve. (9)
17 A good golf score takes almost extreme pain for a model. (7)
19 Put out again! (7)
22 A nice gift for a woman, alternatively the commotion that might result. (5)

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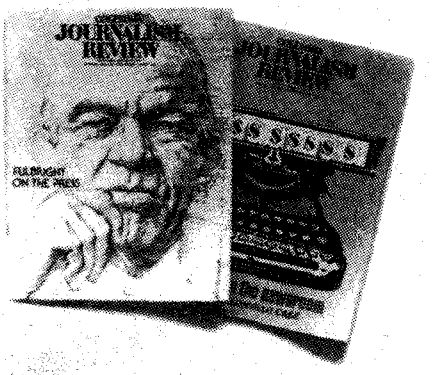

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